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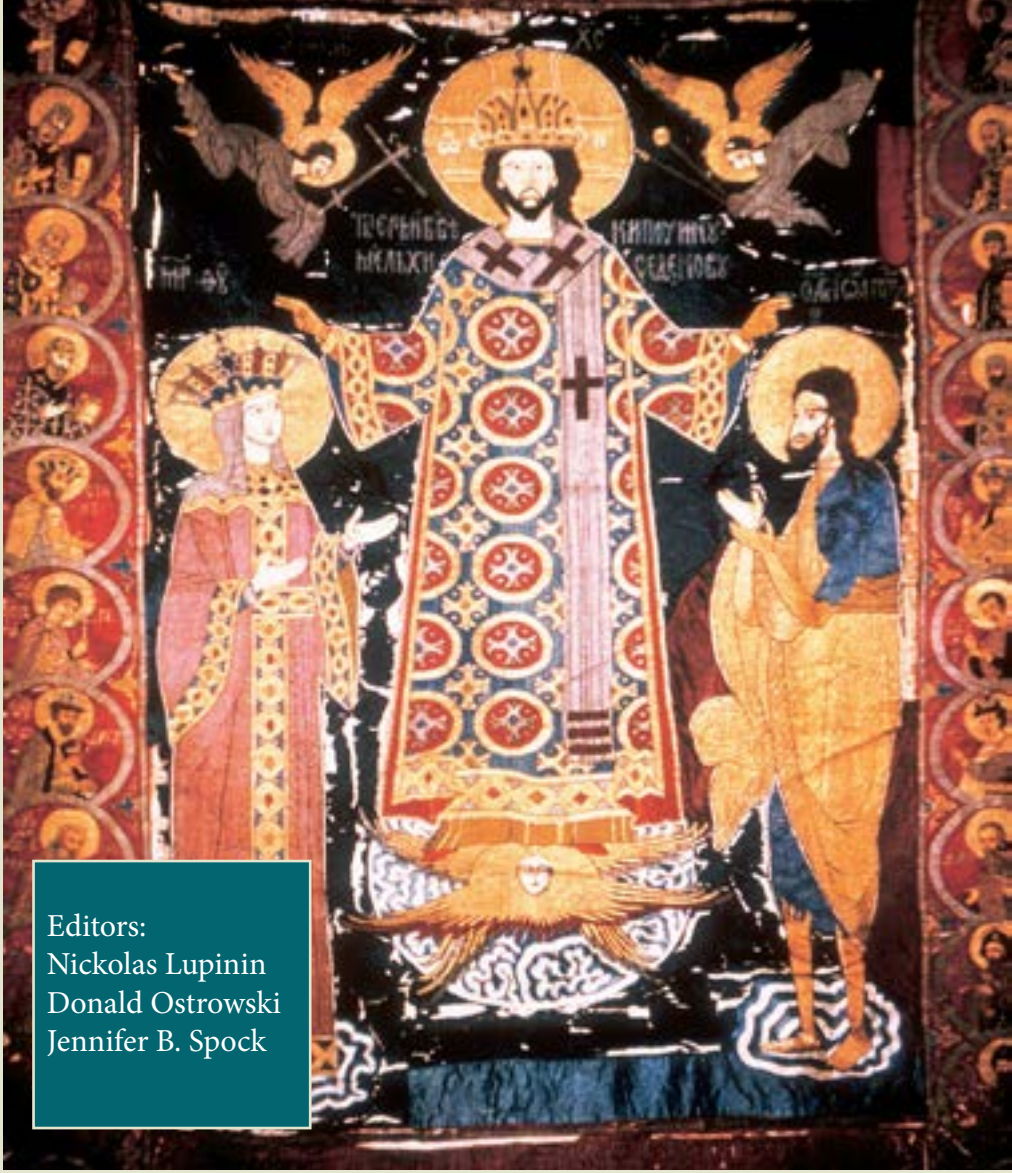
The Tapestry of Russian Christianity



Editors:
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Eastern Christian Studies Vol. 2

The Tapestry of Russian Christianity: Studies in History and Culture

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The Ohio State University

Department of Slavic and East European
Languages and Cultures
&
Resource Center for Medieval Slavic Studies

Ohio Slavic Papers, vol. 10
~
Eastern Christian Studies, vol. 2

THE TAPESTRY OF RUSSIAN CHRISTIANITY

Studies in History and Culture

Edited by Nickolas Lupinin, Donald Ostrowski
and Jennifer B. Spock

Columbus, Ohio
2016

THE TAPESTRY OF RUSSIAN CHRISTIANITY
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Edited by

Nickolas Lupinin, Donald Ostrowski and Jennifer B. Spock

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Katapetasma (Curtain for Royal Doors) of Hilandar Monastery donated in 1556 by Tsar Ivan the Terrible and his wife, Anastasia

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Preface

This volume is a product of the Eastern Christian Studies subseries of the Ohio Slavic Papers, published by the Department of Slavic and Eastern European Languages and Cultures (DSEELC) at The Ohio State University. The Eastern Christian Studies subseries has been administered by officers of the Association for the Study of Eastern Christian History and Culture (ASEC), a national scholarly organization founded in 2003. The Association publishes works on a broad variety of topics and interdisciplinary studies related to the Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Churches and societies of the Eastern Christian traditions. Its publication formatting is therefore tailored to a broader audience than scholars of any one specific field. For that reason, some elements in this volume require explanation.

The system of transliteration from the Cyrillic to the Latin alphabet that is used in the present work follows the current Library of Congress system, with the exception that the "ë" has been rendered as a normal Latin "e", and the letter "й" is rendered with a normal "i." In the transliteration of Old Russian passages, the authors have eliminated the hard sign (*tverdyi znak*) from the end of words to reduce visual confusion to the reader. We have kept the hard sign when it falls in the middle of words. Works published before 1917 have been rendered in the new Russian spelling that is frequently employed in current library catalogs, but titles of unpublished manuscripts retain their original pre-1917 spellings.

Dates in early modern Russia were numbered according to a biblical accounting of the age of the world, using a system by which the first day of the year fell on September 1st. Thus, to render the years according to the modern Gregorian calendar, one must subtract 5509 from the year given in manuscripts for the months of September through December, and subtract 5508 from the year for the months of January through August. When a year is

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given with no month, it is the convention to use a slash mark to designate the overlapping years. For example, the year 7100 in the manuscripts becomes September 1, 1591 to August 31, 1592, or the year 1591/92.

Because this volume relates exclusively to Russia but is geared toward informed readers generally, some slight deviations from the norm have been introduced to the citation of Russian archival documents and manuscript books. Manuscript number ("delo," or "d.") has been replaced by "No." and for plural, "Nos." Manuscript pages (*list* or *listy*— l. or ll.) are changed to "folium" and "folia" at first mention, and then f. and ff. respectively after. Verso (v) is used instead of "ob" (*oborot*).

This volume is the culmination of many years and the work of many dedicated individuals. Two conferences held at Harvard University's Davis Center for Russian Studies (2002) and at Yale University's Center for International and Area Studies (2003) were the genesis for the research and crafting of these thirteen articles.

The Association for the Study of Eastern Christian History and Culture has provided copy-editing and financial assistance. The Department of History at Eastern Kentucky University lent the help of a graduate assistant, Carrie M. Reeder, for portions of the copy-editing. Additionally, T. Lee Clark also assisted with copy-editing. Former chairs, Daniel Collins and Helena Goscilo, and the current chair, Yana Hashamova of The Ohio State University Department of Slavic and Eastern European Languages and Cultures, have supported this project over the past eight years as part of the Ohio Slavic Papers with either editorial or financial assistance. The Resource Center for Medieval Slavic Studies at The Ohio State University has also aided in the planning, financing, and completion of this volume. In particular, RCMSS Director, Dr. Predrag Matejic, Jessi Jones, the Program Coordinator, and Ryan S. Perkins, a graduate associate, have provided invaluable help in the final formatting, and preparation for publication.

Jennifer B. Spock

INTRODUCTION: CHRISTIANITY EAST AND WEST

Nickolas Lupinin and Donald Ostrowski

During the first century A.D., when Christianity began to spread, the Roman Empire was splitting into two administrative units—Greek in the East and Latin in the West. The line dividing these administrative units paralleled already existing cultural divisions and ran east of the boot of Italy from North Africa into the Balkans, specifically what used to be Yugoslavia, along the border of present-day Croatia and Serbia. To the East of that line the administration was Greek, including Greek language and the Greek alphabet. The differences between the present-day Serbs and Croats are indicative of that difference to a degree since the Serbs use a Greek-based Cyrillic alphabet, and the Croats use a Latin alphabet for what was essentially the same language. The Serbs are associated for the most part with the Eastern Church, and the Croats with the Western Church.

When Constantine (306–337) became Roman emperor, he decreed tolerance for Christians, who until then had undergone periodic persecutions by the authorities. He founded his capital, a new city named Constantinople, on the spot where the fishing village of Byzantium was located, and he declared the bishop of Constantinople to be second among prelates only to the bishop

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of Rome. In 451, the Council of Chalcedon established the patriarchate of Constantinople. At the time, there were four chief prelates in the Christian Church: in Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Rome. The patriarch of Constantinople took the lead among the other patriarchies in countering any unilateral decisions of the Roman pontiff. The non-Roman patriarchies saw the Roman pontiff as *primus inter pares* for such things as presiding at church councils, but not for making determinations about doctrine. As a result, major points of disagreement arose between the pope (bishop of Rome) and the Eastern patriarchs.

Major Points of Disagreement

Open to question is the time exactly when the Eastern Church and the Western Church split from each other. Some scholars place it at 1204 when the western warriors of the Fourth Crusade captured Constantinople. Other scholars place it at 1054 when the pope and the patriarch of Constantinople excommunicated each other. Yet other scholars see the split as effectively having occurred earlier. In any case the major points of disagreement had crystallized by the 11th century at the latest. What follows is a brief survey of the most significant of these disagreements.

1. *Language of the Liturgy*. This disagreement was not just a question of whether the language of the liturgy should be Greek or Latin but also a question of whether the local churches could use their own language for the church service. The Western Church used Latin and declared it to be the liturgical language throughout the Christian world. The Eastern Church used Greek in Constantinople, but allowed the local churches to use the local sacred language. Arguments subsequently arose in the historiography about ultimately what this difference meant. Some have seen it as an advantage to the people in the Western Church, especially when they were eager to begin acquiring learning. If one knew Latin, one was already connected with the lingua franca that united Western Christendom, whereas if one were in Rus′ and knew Russian and Church Slavonic, but not Greek, then one could not tap into the corpus of Greek literature. The argument is that the local liturgical language was a disadvantage. On the other hand, putting the church service and accompaning sacred writings into the local language (although an elevated form of it, to be sure) allowed the message of the liturgy and those writings to be more comprehensible to the congregants.

2. *Ritual.* Two different forms of ritual developed in the Eastern and Western Christian traditions. The differences in ritual reflected issues considered significant by communities that were slowly dividing into two churches, and that one frequently encounters mentioned in the sources. For example, these issues included the questions of how many "hallelujahs" to say at the end of the church service, whether the Host was on the altar or in a chalice on the altar, what components should be included as parts of the wedding ritual, and so forth.

3. *Two Swords Theory vs. Harmony of Church and State.* Gelasius I (492–496) was the first pope to articulate a "two powers" doctrine. Pope Gregory VII (1073–1085) developed the idea of spiritual superiority over the temporal in his *Papal Register* of 1075 in which he posited that the pope may depose the emperor. Pope Boniface VIII (1294–1303) expanded upon the two powers idea as well as the superiority of the Church into "two swords" theory in his Bull *Unam sanctum* of 18 November 1302. The idea was that there existed a secular sword and an ecclesiastical sword, and that the ecclesiastical sword was superior to the secular sword. The implication was that the church was superior to the state. In the Byzantine Empire, one finds, instead, a notion of harmony, or symphony, between the two powers—that the church and state should be working together to guide the body and the soul of each person. Patriarch Photios of Constantinople (858–867, 877–886) wrote in his *Epanagōgē* that "the polity, like man, consists of parts and members (among these the most important and the necessary parts are the Emperor and the Patriarch). Wherefore the peace and happiness of subjects, in body and soul, consist in the full agreement and concord of the kingship and the priesthood."[1] In the 17th century, however, Patriarch Nikon applied the Western Church's "two swords" theory to the relationship between tsar and patriarch in Russia.[2] The Church Council of 1666–67 rejected Nikon's formulation and restored the principle of harmony between kingship and priesthood.

4. *Clerical Celibacy vs. Married Priests.* In order to become a priest, a man in the Eastern Church is supposed to be married. In the Western Church, a priest is not allowed to be married. We have

[1] *Jus graecoromanum*, 6: 59–60.

[2] "Vozrazhenie Nikona," 314. Palmer, *Patriarch and Tsar*, 1: 252–253.

evidence from as early as the third century, that, although bishops, priests, and deacons could be married, they were not to have sexual relations with their wives after ordination. The eventual difference in whether clergy could or should be married represented different interpretations of Canon VI of the Sixth Ecumenical Council (Third Council of Constantinople) 680–681: "And if any of those who enter the clergy wishes to be joined to a wife in lawful marriage before he is ordained a subdeacon, deacon, or presbyter, let it be done."[3] The Eastern Church interpreted this canon to say that in order to become a priest, a man had to be married. Beginning with the late 11th-century Gregorian reforms, the Western Church began to frown upon married clergy entirely. The Second Lateran Council of 1139 declared clerical marriage illegal, which took hold fully in the 13th century. According to the Union of Brest in 1596, the so-called Ukrainian Catholics (Uniates or Greek Catholics) were allowed to maintain such Eastern Church practices as a married clergy, the Julian calendar, and exclusion of the *filioque* in the Nicene Creed, while acknowledging the Western Church primacy of the Pope.

5. *Unleavened Bread vs. Leavened Bread.* Unleavened bread is on the altar during the church service and served in communion in the Western Church, whereas leavened bread is served in communion in the Eastern Church. The Eastern Church favors leavened bread in communion because it represents the risen Christ. The Western Church considers leavening to be unholy and claims one is eating a living thing because the leavening is usually yeast (although it can be some other microorganism such as a bacterium called *clostridium perfringens*).

6. *Statues vs. Icons.* Before the eighth century, statues, paintings, and mosaics of holy figures appeared in Christian churches. Iconoclasts in the Eastern Roman Empire, basing their stance on the commandment against graven images, objected to such representational art. Iconodules (those who supported representational depiction of religious persons) argued the biblical prohibition was against worshipping images, not the images themselves. Conflicts, at times with a significant number of fatalities, occurred between iconoclasts and iconodules in the Byzantine Empire for about 100 years from the early eighth to the early ninth centuries.

[3] *Select Library*, 14: 364.

Finally, a compromise was reached in the Eastern Church whereby statuary was excluded, but two-dimensional representations were allowed as long as the artists followed strict stylistic guidelines so as to depict the spirituality of the figure rather than its corporality. The final re-establishment of icons came under Empress Irene in 843, an act now commemorated in Eastern Orthodoxy as "the Triumph of Orthodoxy." The Western Church has maintained statuary and realistic representational art. Since the Reformation, Calvinist groups have looked askance at such representational depictions.

7. *Role of the Pope (i.e., Bishop of Rome).* A crucial difference of views developed on the role of the pope. Western Churchmen argued that the pope decided judicial, administrative, and dogmatic issues because, according to Matt. 16:18, Jesus said, "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church." Peter, so the argument goes, was the first pope, the first bishop of Rome. The Eastern Church says that is not the case. Peter just happened to end up in Rome but that did not give the pope any priority in making decisions; it only made him primus inter pares. The bishop of Rome could open, close, and preside over councils of all the church prelates. Other than that he had no priority in decision-making. That was the big bone of contention. As early as the papacy of Victor I (189–199), the Roman pontiff unilaterally declared the Roman church's method for determining the celebration of Easter to be the only correct one. The church leaders in the eastern Mediterranean disagreed. As a result, the Eastern and Western Churches developed different formulae for computing the date of Easter.

8. *Doctrinal Issues.* Perhaps the most fiercely and extensively argued doctrinal difference concerns the Filioque Clause. This clause is an emendation to the Nicene Creed (325), which states that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father. The Western Church at the Third Council of Toledo (589), endorsed by the Bishop of Rome, added "filioque" (and the son) to the Nicene Creed so that the Holy Spirit was said to process from both Father and Son. In the ninth century, Patriarch Photios, who had been declared deposed by Pope Nicholas, condemned the use of *filioque* as heretical. In subsequent years, the Eastern Church proposed other possibilities for the way the procession of the Holy Spirit occurs but the Western Church has rejected all of these proposals.

Other doctrinal differences include the nature of Original Sin, the existence of Purgatory, the Immaculate Conception, the nature of Hell, the nature of Man, and free will. The Western Church accepted the formulation of Augustine (354–430) that original sin is transferred to the soul of each new born baby through the parents' souls (traducianism). The Eastern Church rejects that formulation in favor of the idea that each soul is created anew by God. The Western Church's notion of original sin being transferred to the souls of children led to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception—that when the Virgin Mary's soul was conceived in her mother Ann's womb, it was done immaculately without the imbuing of it with original sin. The Eastern Church rejects the doctrine of Immaculate Conception since, among other reasons, that doctrine does not comport with its notion of how souls are created.

Between 1160 and 1180, the Western Church developed the doctrine of Purgatory—the place where souls go after death to be purified of residual sin through punishment. Eastern Church theologians agree that not all souls go immediately to Heaven or Hell after death, but they see this intermediate condition as being one of growth not punishment. Thus, prayers for the dead and documents of absolution serve a slightly different function in the Eastern Church from what they do in the Western Church.

9. *Calendar.* Disagreements over calendar use were also fiercely argued. The initial difference in calendars between Rome and Byzantium concerned whether to count from the birth of Christ (Rome) or from the creation of the world (Byzantium). The calendar dating years since the birth of Christ (the *Anno Domini* system) was devised by Dionysius Exiguus in 525 but did not become widespread in the West until centuries later. The Roman Church began using it for dating documents only in the 11th century. The Eastern Church continued to count years according to the ruling of the Sixth Ecumenical Council (Third Council of Constantinople) in 680–681 that the world was created in 5509 B.C. Upon the Russian government's adoption of the *Anno Domini* system in 1700, the Russian Church followed suit, but by that time the papacy had jettisoned the Julian Calendar for the Gregorian Calendar. That changeover came in 1582 under the papacy of Pope Gregory XIII (1572–1585). In 1923, a split occurred in the Eastern Church when, at an ecumenical council in Constantinople, the Orthodox churches of Alexandria, Antioch, Bulgaria,

Constantinople, Cyprus, Greece, Romania, and other New Calendarists adopted a Revised Julian Calendar, which is more accurate than the Gregorian Calendar but allows calculating moveable feasts the traditional way.[4] The Orthodox churches of Georgia, Jerusalem, Macedonia, Poland, Russia, Serbia, and other Old Calendarists continue, however, to use the old Julian Calendar.[5]

10. *Relationship of Reason to Faith.* By the time of Scholasticism, the Western Church accepted that reason, in the form of dialectic (logic), can be used to defend faith. In the Eastern Church the prevailing notion was that dialectic has no significant relationship to faith. Instead of dividing God's creations into categories, Eastern Church theology tends to focus on the wholeness of God's creation.

As Christianity was gaining first legitimacy and then dominance within the Roman Empire during the fourth century, a series of compromises of antithetical philosophical and theological views occurred. The fragmentation of the Western Roman Empire in the fifth century forced the competing theological factions in the West either to compromise or to be declared heretical. Each compromise laid the groundwork for the next compromise in a constantly evolving synthesis. In order to gain legitimacy among the pagan elite, the church fathers adopted and synthesized with early Christianity a respectable form of pagan philosophy—Neoplatonism. The version of Neoplatonism that the Western church fathers adopted was itself a synthesis of features of mysticism with the Aristotelian logic of the Roman Stoics. As a result, the Western Church allowed the teaching of dialectic within the school curriculum before the 12th century as one of the seven liberal arts. The initial function of dialectic in determining knowledge, however, was limited. It took centuries for the role of dialectic to be expanded, and it did so against serious opposition.

By the 11th century, a synthesis of reason and faith had evolved such that dialectic could be used to describe particulars as long as those particulars coincided with those that faith had already determined. In the 13th century, a new synthesis emerged in which, as a result of the acceptance of dialectic as a descriptive tool and the influx of Aristotelian texts (especially the *Topics* and

[4] Milankovitch, "Das Ende des julianischen Kalenders," 379–384.
[5] Ware, *Orthodox Church*, 301–303.

Sophistic Refutations), dialectic was allowed a diagnostic role in determining particulars, as long as those particulars did not contradict the particulars that faith had determined. This difference between "coinciding" and "not contradicting" was an important one for it amounted to another step up for dialectic. Dialectic, thus, had to itself the entire realm of this world, which Neoplatonism dismissed as unimportant.

In the Eastern Church, after the initial synthesis of early Christianity with pagan Neoplatonism, further compromises were avoided so as to maintain the purity of faith. In part, this avoidance can be explained by the form of Neoplatonism adopted in the Eastern Church, which rejected dialectic even as a descriptive tool. Any attempts to use dialectic as a diagnostic tool in matters of doctrine were immediately suppressed. Indicative of this suppression is the absence of dialectic in the school curriculum in Byzantium. In this respect, the centralized power of the Eastern Roman Empire helped maintain theological purity. The Western Church allowed a space for dialectic to develop as a discipline in its own right and eventually to grow and to dominate conceptual thinking in the secular culture, while the Eastern Church eliminated that space and thereby precluded a similar phenomenon from occurring.

11. *Form and Function of Monasticism.* Constantinople had remained for centuries the sole focus of high culture throughout the Christian world. Whatever seeped out to the provinces was sharply circumscribed and controlled. These restrictions were due to the fact that the conduits for Byzantine culture were the monasteries, and the form and function of monasticism had developed differently in the Eastern and Western churches. In the Eastern Church, the primary and almost sole ostensible function of monasticism was the salvation of the soul of the individual monk (which is not to say that many of the monasteries did not become significantly profitable corporations in their own right). Eremitic monasticism predominated in the eastern Mediterranean, and, even in those areas where communal monasteries developed, there was no concept of preserving writings other than those that were liturgical and scriptural in nature. Compendia of sanitized pagan writings were copied, preserved, and used for instruction in the secular culture. Byzantium, as the imitation (*mimesis*) of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, acted to maintain the purity of the written word and artistic form (e.g., strict rules for icon painting).

In the Western Church, the development of monasticism coincided with the fall of the Roman Empire and, more importantly, was influenced by the perception of a Golden Age about to be lost. When Boethius' student Cassiodorus founded his monastery of Vivarium on his lands at Squillace in Calabria in southern Italy around the year 540, he helped establish the idea, along with the salvation of the soul of individual monks, of preserving the "salvation kit of Latinity"[6] for a future, better time. The orientation of Byzantine monasticism was merely an outward manifestation of a deep structural difference in mentalité between the two churches. And that difference can be traced back to the different ways Neoplatonism was synthesized with church dogma in Eastern and Western Christianity and their subsequently differing epistemologies.

Neoplatonism also differed from Platonism in certain significant ways, including the assertion that it is impossible to say anything about what the One is, beyond that the One is Goodness, Truth, and Beauty. Thus, only apophatic theology can be used to discuss the One—we can say only what it is not. Ultimately, however, we can comprehend through the silence of mystical union. This silence of mystical union with the One can be seen to coincide with the so-called "intellectual silence" of Rus' culture. It derives from the Byzantine blend of Christianity with Neoplatonism and entered Rus' through Eastern Church monasticism. As a result, communion with the divine is to be experienced, not thought or perceived.

The mysticism of the Eastern Church in having part of the liturgy take place in the sanctuary behind the iconostasis, hidden from the parishioners' view, derives from a more explicit implementation of the mystery of God. Not only can we not have any positive knowledge of God, but also any knowledge of the Mind of God that we might obtain through the Divine Soul is only partial and imperfect. Salvation occurs through our own souls for our own souls in synergy (*synergeia*) or cooperation with God.

12. *Biblical Interpretation.* The two views are illustrated in the differing ways of interpreting the Bible. The Western Church came heavily under the influence of Origen's allegorical interpretation of Scripture for unclear, unrealistic, or difficult to understand passages. This approach suggested that the underlying reality of the

[6] Lehmann, *European Heritage*, 46.

Divine Soul could be understood in a one-to-one relationship with this world—that is, metaphorically. In other words, what happens in this world has a more or less direct relationship to, and is a metaphor for, understanding the next. Although the allegorical interpretation also existed in the Eastern Church, it was subordinate to the prevailing Eastern Church's approach, which was a grammatical, non-metaphoric interpretation of Scripture, a style of interpretation that was influenced by John Chrysostom (ca. 349–407).

Eastern Church Thought

It may not be too much of a generalization to characterize Eastern Church thought as synthetic, as bringing everything together into one whole, one entirety, one eternity. The political structure of Byzantium reflected that view—one *ruler* over the whole world, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. This approach characterized the individual as inseparably part of the whole, and the whole encompassed all the individual parts. Western Church thought began as basically synthetic, but due to various divisions—political, religious, intellectual—an analytic trend developed. Ideas and concepts were broken down (analyzed), categorized, then recombined in different ways. The "two swords" theory was one manifestation of a dichotomous approach.

For Eastern Church theologians, it made no sense to argue about the mystery of things for there was nothing to argue about. They rejected what in their view were innovations such as grammar, rhetoric, and logic as "tricks" and "guiles." They did not condemn the devices that happened to be grammatical, rhetorical, and dialectical in nature as much as the use of grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic to advance one's views. Even the trivium could be an innovation that distracted one from the true path. The Eastern Church's apophatic tradition that began with Iamblichos (ca. 245–ca. 325) and Proclos (412–487), continued through the writings of Leontios the Hermit, Maximos the Confessor (580–662), and John of Damascus (676–749), and includes Patriarch Jeremias II (1572–1579, 1580–1584, 1587–1595). The question of whether the Eastern Church ranked its authorities was ably answered by Yale University professor and scholar of the history of Christianity, Jaroslav Pelikan, in his investigation of this question in the writings of Maximos the Confessor:

> Such, then, was the structure of authority in the theology of Maximus: the teaching "of a council or of a father or of Scripture," but in fact of all three in a dynamic interrelation by which no one of the three could be isolated as the sole authority. Scripture was supreme, but only if it was interpreted in a spiritual and orthodox way. The fathers were normative, but only if they were harmonized with one another and related to the Scripture from which they drew. The Councils were decisive, but only as voices of the one apostolic and prophetic and patristic doctrine.[7]

The building blocks, the elements of knowledge, are quotations from the Divine Writings. Indeed, one of the most widespread collections of Patristic sayings in Rus′ was a Byzantine compilation called *Melissa* (the *Bee*). We could think of any such compilation as a bouquet in which the sayings were like flowers that could be arranged in different ways. Practitioners of Christian Neoplatonic epistemology were allowed to rearrange the "flowers" so as to, as we would say, defamiliarize them in order to understand them anew. This practice may be why many works from early Rus′ appear to be merely mosaics of quotations from the Bible and church fathers, and why what the linguist William Veder calls, the "kaleidoscopic randomization" or "chaotization" of the order in which the quotations in a written composition, or the order of compositions in a codex, becomes so important.[8] If one hears the same things in the same order all the time, the law of diminishing returns sets in. One becomes numbed to their message or function as a catalyst. By rearranging them, the reader or listener sees and hears them anew, in a different light, and they again can function as a catalyst to startle the reader or listener into some new internal revelation. Not only does the randomization/chaotization have aesthetic value, as Veder has suggested, but it also has epistemological value.

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[7] Pelikan, "Council or Father or Scripture," 287.

[8] The term "kaleidoscopic randomization" to describe the constant rearrangement of works from codex to codex was coined by the Slavonic philologist William Veder. Veder, "Literature as Kaleidoscope." Veder later substituted the term *chaotization* for *randomization* because the latter "still reflects a definite structural principle." Veder, "Old Russia's 'Intellectual Silence'," 26n41. But it is *chaos* that reflects a structure beyond the horizon line of our understanding, while *random* implies no such structure. Veder compared *Melissa* compilations to pre-12th-century florilegia in the Western Church.

The Russian Church

The Russian Church inherited the prevailing tradition of the Byzantine Church that learning was descriptive ("a continuous and sublime recapitulation"[9]) of what was already known, not diagnostic for determining previously unknown truths. In addition, with the exception of the Kirillo-Belozersk Monastery in the mid- to late 15th century,[10] we have no evidence of any school being set up in Russia to teach the trivium and quadrivium. But, even if such a curriculum had existed throughout Russia, it would have subsumed dialectic to a place as insignificant as the Byzantine Church did.

When the Islamic expansion began threatening and conquering the Eastern provinces of the Byzantine Empire, the Byzantine clerics began to look elsewhere, such as Africa, to expand Orthodoxy. They also started looking in Eastern Europe, especially Moravia, in the eighth and ninth centuries and came into conflict with the Western Church in this area. In addition, they also ventured northward along the Dnepr (Dnieper) River and among the Slavic people there. In 989, the prince of Kiev, Vladimir (Volodimir), converted to Christianity.[11] The patriarch of Constantinople appointed a metropolitan to head the Rus' Church in 992. Thereafter until 1299, metropolitans of Kiev and all Rus' resided in Kiev.

After the Mongol invasion of Rus' (1237–1240), a bishop was installed in Sarai, the capital of the Ulus of Jochi (the most accurate name for what is popularly and erroneously called the Golden Horde), in order to tend to Christians coming through the city, and to act as a personal envoy from the Rus' Church. In 1299, probably as the result of a steppe war between two Mongol/Tatar rulers, Nogai and Tokhta, Metropolitan Maksim (1283–1305)

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[9] This is the phrase of the fictional monk Jorge de Bourgos in Eco, *Name of the Rose*, 399.

[10] Romanchuk, *Byzantine Hermeneutics*, 140.

[11] The traditional date for Vladimir's conversion is 988, but that date is based on the appearance in the *Rus´ Primary Chronicle* (*Povest' vremennykh let* or *Tale of Bygone Years) sub anno* 6496 (987/8) of his attack on Kherson, where the conversion is described as having taken place. But insofar as the events referred to therein can be correlated with related contemporaneous events described in other sources, the year 989 is the more likely date. See Poppe, "Political Background," 208.

officially moved to Vladimir-on-the-Kliazma in the North.[12] Maksim's successor, Peter (1308–1326), unofficially began to reside in Moscow. Grand Duke of Lithuania Olgerd proposed a rival metropolitan in 1354. From then until the 1680s, a metropolitan residing in western Rus' asserted a rival claim to heading the metropolitanate of Kiev and all Rus'.

In 1441, the Rus' bishops and Grand Prince Vasilii II of all Rus' (1425–1462) rejected the metropolitan, Isidor, sent by the patriarch of Constantinople. They did so because he had accepted the union of Eastern and Western Churches decided by the Council of Florence-Ferrara (1438–1439). The Rus' bishops then arranged to have one of their own, Archbishop Iona, appointed metropolitan by Vasilii II. The ousting of Isidor and ascent of Iona introduced a period of relative autocephaly for the Rus' Church, while at the same time maintaining sporadic contact with the patriarch of Constantinople. In 1588, the patriarch of Constantinople, Jeremiah, and his entourage came to Moscow looking for donations. The Muscovite government would not let them leave until they agreed to appoint a patriarch in Moscow, which they did in 1589.[13] The raising of the status of the metropolitan of Moscow and all Rus' to patriarch also involved the raising of existing archbishops—Novgorod, Rostov, Kazan', and Sarai—to metropolitans. In 1667, a church council elevated the archbishops of Astrakhan', Riazan', Tobol'sk, and Belgorod to metropolitan status.

In the second half of the 17th century, reforms by Patriarch Nikon (1652–1658) led to a split (*raskol*) within the church, which schism, as a result, came to be called "the Raskol."[14] Those who opposed the reforms were eventually grouped under an umbrella term, "Old Believers," but the contemporary opposition was more widespread and involved opposition to the state as well.[15]

In 1721, Peter I replaced the patriarchate with a Holy Governing Synod. No new metropolitans were appointed until the reign of Elizabeth (1741–1762), when she appointed metropolitans for Kiev (1747) and Moscow (1757). Catherine II (1762–1796) appointed a metropolitan for St. Petersburg (1783). Monasteries

[12] Ostrowski, "Move of the Metropolitan," revised version.

[13] Gudziak, *Crisis and Reform*, 171–187. Jeremiah and his entourage then went on to Kiev, where they helped in the revival of Orthodoxy in Ukrainian lands.

[14] Lupinin, *Religious Revolt*.

[15] Michels, *At War with the Church*.

continued to gather land and wealth until 1764 when Catherine II secularized church and monastic lands. The Russian government then gave monks a yearly stipend. During the course of the 19th century, although the church educated more people than the state, and although many of the new intellectuals were priests' sons (*popovichi*), a definite anti-clerical attitude developed among the educated elite. Nonetheless, the church remained as important as ever for people's daily lives. In 1917, after the Bolshevik takeover, the patriarchate of Moscow was reestablished and various new metropolitanates created.

Articles Herein

In the essays in this book, we find many insights into the impact that the Russian Orthodox Church had on society and culture.

In chapter one, "Vladimir's Conversion to Christianity: Divine Providence and the Taking of Kherson," David K. Prestel (Michigan State University) discusses how in the account presented in the *Rus' Primary Chronicle* of the conversion of Vladimir to Christianity, a prominent place is occupied by a Greek philosopher, who tells the story of the history of the world. This history represents the revelation of God's plan for salvation, and historical events needed to be explained within that context. Three main points of the account stand out: 1) that God has worked through individuals and desires to use Vladimir for his purposes; 2) conversion of the Gentiles is a mandate that includes the conversion of Rus'; and 3) focusing of the conversion experience on the Incarnation, by which means Vladimir's heart and mind are prepared, but his conversion must be delayed pending the arrival of circumstances that favor the concurrence of divine purpose and human agency.

In chapter two, "Politics and Hierarchy in the Early Rus' Church: Antonii, a 13th-Century Archbishop of Novgorod," George P. Majeska (University of Maryland) tells us about Dobrynia Iadreikovich, better known as Archbishop Antonii of Novgorod (1211–1219 and 1225–1228), and how he is best known to the scholarly community as a result of his description of Constantinople in the year 1200 found in his *Pilgrim Book*. Producing such a work as the *Pilgrim Book* presupposes a talented and sophisticated author whose biography bears study. It would seem clear that Archbishop Antonii was from an important family of Novgorod, most likely of merchant-boyar stock. His trip to Constantinople would have required a considerable amount of money, probably his own,

since no evidence exists that he was part of an official delegation. His choice to be archbishop, according to Majeska, reflected the rise of an anti-Suzdal' faction in Novgorod. His later informal canonization in the 15th century can be associated with Novgorodian attempts to remain independent from a new menace, Moscow.

In chapter three, "Another Look at the Solid Iconostasis in the Russian Orthodox Church," Father Robert M. Arida of Boston's Trinity Orthodox Church suggests that conflict within the hesychast movement may have played a role in the emergence of the solid and vertically developed iconostasis. The solid iconostasis helped to create a vision of liturgy and icon that had little to do with the interpenetration of history and eschatology. The emphasis on Christ's coming again as both an inaugurated and anticipated reality slipped into the background of liturgical worship. This concept of an inaugurated eschatology, *Marana Tha*, was displaced by the quest for individual perfection. The world as sacrament and therefore the interpenetration (*perichoresis*) of matter and spirit, divinity and humanity became obscured. The solid iconostasis, in Arida's view, disrupted the balanced hesychasm of Gregory Palamas (1296–1359).

In chapter four, "Round Up the Usuals and a Few Others: Glimpses into the Knowledge, Role and Use of Church Fathers in Rus' and Russian Monasticism, Late 11th to Early 16th Centuries," David M. Goldfrank (Georgetown University) points out that the inherent tension between individuality and community in monasticism and in traditional Christianity was reflected in the dual life of the patristic tradition, since at least some individual fathers retained their individuality, while they were also submerged, like the others, in the mass of "divine writings." How did what might be called a tradition of church fathers develop and evolve in the Russian Orthodox Church? Goldfrank concludes that, in studying the writings of Iosif Volotskii and Nil Sorskii, one already finds a living Middle Muscovite monastic patristic tradition in which there was room for a great deal of diversity and innovation.

In chapter five, "The Moscow Councils of 1447 to 1589 and the Conciliar Period in Russian Orthodox Church History," Donald Ostrowski (Harvard University) reports that, although historians have been inventive in attributing doctrines to the Russian Church that would count as significant innovations during the 15th and 16th centuries, almost all these practices and formulations were well within the already well-accepted doctrines of the Eastern Church. Upon examining such issues as the so-called Judaizer

heresy, church factions, mid-16th-century polemics, the relationship between secular and ecclesiastical authorities, iconography and church decoration, the relationship of the Novgorod archiepiscopal see with the Moscow metropolitanate, and establishment of the patriarchate, instead of ad hoc doctrines and practices manufactured to deal with issues that were unique to Muscovy, one finds, according to Ostrowski, an adoption of pre-existing doctrines and practices.

In chapter six, "Cultural Diversity, Imperial Strategies, and the Issue of Faith: Toleration in Early Modern Russia in Comparative Perspective," Maria Arel (Marianopolis College, Montreal) points out that Muscovite awareness of Russia's shortcomings in certain areas of the society and its need to improve itself vis-à-vis Poland and Sweden to the west and the Ottoman Empire to the south supported the "first" wave (i.e., 17th-century) of Western European migration to Russia. Although Muscovites could be hostile and suspicious towards Catholics and Protestants, the Muscovites who governed understood that the West had much to offer Russia to help it survive geopolitically and even dominate Eurasia. This ruling class operated in a milieu that afforded them, unlike most of their European counterparts, the luxury of tolerating more than one religion, and of adopting differential religious policies to suit specific groups at specific junctures.

The study of commemoration for the dead is a new field with a long history. Many new studies have appeared on a broad spectrum of topics in the field, but still no effort has been made to synthesize them. Chapter seven, "Praying for the Dead: Kinship Awareness and Orthodox Belief in the Commemorations of Muscovite Royalty" by Russell E. Martin (Westminster College), is one of these efforts to do so. Although we find commemoration at the center of Orthodox religious practice, it is as yet poorly understood. An almost insurmountable cultural barrier has prevented Western scholars, and an ideological barrier prevented Soviet scholars, from working on the topic. Research requires access to scattered archival repositories. These sources are often liturgical and resistant to interpretation. The historian, as Martin demonstrates, requires experience with these sources and their conventions, as well as some grasp of Orthodox eschatology to "read" them.

Two directions have developed in the historiography for the study of northern monasticism. One approach sees the monasteries as primarily political and economic entities. The other direction, while acknowledging their political and economic roles,

focuses on monasteries as primarily religious and pious entities. It is this latter direction that Jennifer B. Spock (Eastern Kentucky University) undertakes in chapter eight, "Northern Russian Monastic Culture." At the heart of this new direction is a discussion of their regional context and the role of the leader/teacher. These issues will explore the differences between types of communities, such as cenobia (communal), on the one hand, and sketes (hermitages), on the other, in social makeup, economic function, and pious forms. In addition, Spock shifts from focusing solely on a single type of text to attempting the integration of a variety of sources.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, the Russian Church remained basically a monastic church in terms of its spirituality. But a new monastic spirit, one that was educated, developed. The Russians built a national church in the middle of the 16th century, including the creation of a patriarchate, but that process did not change the underlying spiritual and institutional dependence of the Russian Church on the Greek Church. The Russian Church did not create its own spiritual and (partially) material culture. When it tried to do so, as Nikolaos Chrissidis (Southern Connecticut State University) explains in chapter nine, "Between Forgiveness and Indulgence: Funerary Prayers of Absolution in Russia," it looked for prototypes elsewhere (Ukraine, Greece, the West). Similarly, Greek Orthodoxy responded materially and spiritually to impulses from the West in the 16th and 17th centuries. Therefore, according to Chrissidis, the influence of Greek Orthodoxy on 17th-century Russian Orthodoxy is fundamentally Western in nature.

The Old Believers, a term that applies to a wide range of anti-Nikonian, anti-state religious dissenters who trace their origins to the mid- to late 17th century, are best understood as Eastern Orthodox Christians. As "unofficial" religious institutions, both priestly and priestless, Old Believer communities, according to Robert O. Crummey (University of California, Davis) in chapter ten, "Old Believer Communities: Ideals and Structures," governed their own affairs independently of any hierarchical structure or national organization. Old Believer communities combined elements of the cenobitic monastery or convent, the lay parish, and the peasant village. The mix of these elements was different from community to community and changed over the course of time. But, according to Crummey, each of the fundamental forms of Old Believer organization has contributed to the survival of the movement.

The present historical picture of elders in the Russian Church stands in need of correction and augmentation. One can supplement the general pattern by examining sources and studying individuals who have tended to be overlooked. The inner lives of the elders, as Nickolas Lupinin (Franklin Pierce University) demonstrates in chapter 11, "The Tradition of Elders (*Startsy*) in 19th-Century Russia," tells us, instantiates humility, mysticism, spiritual direction, obedience, asceticism and ascetic labor, hesychasm, prayer, silence, and immersion in a tradition. Lupinin goes on to produce a concomitant list of other aspects of their lives, such as healing the sick, bearing suffering, dramatic personal encounters, the tribulation of judging others, reigning in the passions, and comforting endless visitors.

Getting at the heart of women's spirituality at all levels of Russian society in the 19th century is extremely difficult, given the paucity of sources that privilege women. What the average woman thought about God, the Mother of God, Christ, the saints, salvation, and the role that the church played in her life is not easy to ascertain. The historian has to tease information out of a limited number of autobiographies and biographies, sensational stories in the press, and numerous formulaic miracle tales. What Christine Worobec (Northern Illinois University) finds, and reports in chapter 12, "Russian Orthodoxy and Women's Spirituality in Imperial Russia," is that the sources demonstrate ways in which Russian Orthodoxy was relevant to women's lives, as well as the ways in which Orthodoxy empowered women. The tenacity with which women clung to Orthodox practices in the early Soviet period, when religion came under attack, can only be understood, according to Worobec, by further exploring avenues of women's spirituality in the 19th century.

Gregory Freeze (Brandeis University) argues in chapter 13, "Rediscovering the Orthodox Past: The Microhistorical Approach to Religious Practice in Imperial Russia," that, given the new accessibility of archives outside the capitals, historians should refocus their research and rely more on local and less on central archives. The principal thesis here is that the use of local repositories will not merely enhance but *change* our perception of Russian religious history. The central repositories, while valuable and indispensable, provide an incomplete, even distorted picture; these files are necessarily too aggregated (as statistics), too

abstract (as reports), and too incomplete (as case records) to provide a clear understanding of grassroots reality. In a word, it is not merely desirable, but essential to refocus research on *local history* and, in projects with an empire-wide focus, to include a salient case-study component (or components). To be sure, some historians, according to Freeze, have begun to tap local repositories, but the scale has been relatively limited. While the imperative to "go local" doubtless applies to all fields, his essay focuses on Russian religious history, which is now a principal topic of study in historical scholarship.

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GLOSSARY

ambon – in an Orthodox church, a prominent separate raised platform in the center of the nave connected by a raised walkway to the sanctuary

Amvrosii, Elder (1812–1890) – the most famous of the 19th-century Optina elders

ascesis – the exercise of self-discipline

beglopopovtsy – Old Believers who maintained a clergy by means of accepting fugitive priests from the Orthodox Church

beguny (or *stranniki*) – most radical of the Old Believer groups; ideal of flight from the world is a dominant motif

Belokrinitsy – Old Believers who accepted the canonicity (in 1846) of a deposed Bosnian bishop in order to restore traditional hierarchical structure and full sacramental life

blagochinnyi – local church dean

bogadel'nia – charitable institution

bogadel'nye doma – almshouses; used by Old Believer communities to register their institutions

boyar (*boiar*) – a member of the Rus' and Russian elite whose rank was just below that of a prince or tsar, and whose title was earned by a combination of family position and meritorious service

Chasovenniki – followers of the predominant Old Believer accord in the Urals and Siberia

chernichki – lay sisters who followed monastic life but did not enter religious institutions; term refers to the black clothing worn

Council of 1503 – decided on matters of ecclesiastical discipline and procedure

Council of 1666–1667 – deposed Patriarch Nikon; condemned the schismatics (*starovery*, or Old Believers); specified tsar's primacy over the Church

dannye – donation charters

deisis (deesis) – since the 19th century, most often used "to identify as an image of intercession the Byzantine composition of the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist standing on either side of Christ with their hands extended toward him" (*ODB*); the second row of the iconostasis

deloproizvodstvo – everyday documents (in daily diocesan affairs)

diataxis – "a book of rubrics for the bishop or priest presiding at the Eucharist" (*ODB*)

Dobrotoliubie – the *Philokalia*

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Dositheos, Patriarch (1641–1707) – Greek theologian; patriarch of Jerusalem; author of a history of the patriarchate of Jerusalem

dukhovnye – wills

dvoeverie – dual belief (Orthodox and pagan)

elder – spiritual father

eparchy – diocese

epitimiia – canonical penance

Fedoseevtsy – one of the two largest priestless Old Believer groups

Filippov, Ivan (1655–1744) – wrote a famous history of the Vyg community

Fillipovtsy – Old Believer group that broke away from the Pomortsy

Gennadii, Archbishop of Novgorod (1484–1504) – persecuted heretics; directed the compilation of the first complete Church Slavonic Bible

Grebenshchikovskaia Obshchina – largest Old Believer community in Riga

hesychasm – stillness; "in the Eastern Church the tradition of inner, mystical prayer associated above all with the monks of Mt. Athos" monological prayer" (*BDEC*) (*ODCC*); a monastic lifestyle in "a specific mystical tradition of monological prayer (*BDEC*)

hieromonk – a monk who is also a priest

Holy Synod – government bureau that governed the Orthodox Church in Russia from 1721 to 1917 as the Most Holy Governing Synod

Homoousios – "(lit. 'consubstantial,' of the same substance), term crucial for the understanding of the relationship among the persons within the Trinity" (*ODB*)

iasak – in the Muscovite era, tribute assessed against non-Orthodox in frontier regions; previously imposed by the Mongols

iconostasis – in Orthodox churches, the icon screen that separates the altar from the main body of the church

igumen – hegumen, abbot; male leader of a monastery

inocheskii ustav – monastic rule

Iona, Metropolitan (r. 1448–1461) – bishop of Riazan', elected metropolitan by the Moscow Church Council of 1448, which signaled the independence of the Russian Church from Constantinople

ispovednye rospisi – confessional lists

Jesus Prayer – key element of hesychasm; the prayer of the heart: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner"

Joseph of Volokolamsk (1439/40–1515) – abbot of Volokolamsk Monastery, involved in many political-religious struggles. His monastic rule emphasized the communal vs. the ascetic.

Judaizers – heretics who were seen as focusing too extensively on the Judaic components of Christianity

keleinitsy – lay sisters who followed monastic life but did not enter religious institutions, similar to *chernichki*. The term emphasizes a separate cell or dwelling place.

keleinyi ustav – cell rule

khozhdenie – a medieval literary genre of the travelogue form

kladbishche (cemetery) – term often used by Old Believers when registering their communities with the state

klikushi – shriekers

kormovye knigi – "feast books"; list of commemorations held on church holidays or to honor the deceased

Kovylin, Il'ia Alekseevich (1731–1809) – founder of the Preobrazhensk Old Believer community

Križanić, Juraj (ca. 1618–1683) – Croatian Catholic priest, in Russia from 1659 to 1677; wrote a famous work on the Russian state

Leonid, Elder (1768–1841) – first major elder of Optina Pustyn'; the establishment of Optina's dominant tradition of eldership is generally attributed to him

Livonia – an area on the coast of the Baltic Sea that at various times included parts of present-day Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania

Makarii, Elder (1788–1860) – Optina elder; oversaw major publications and translations of patristic texts

Makarii, Metropolitan (r. 1542–1563) – head of Russian Church; one of Ivan IV's principle advisors; presided over the Stoglav (Council of a Hundred Chapters) 1551; edited the *Great Menaia* (the Menologion)

Maksim Grek (ca. 1475–1556) – religious scholar; brought to Russia as a translator in 1518; became embroiled in church-state disputes and was confined for a number of years until his death

Marana Tha – (literally, "Come, Lord") an inaugurated eschatology

menologion (menology) – lives of saints arranged by the months of the year according to the holiday for each

moleben – a short special church service, supplicatory or of thanksgiving (plural, *molebeny*)

Moninsk Community – a major Old Believer priestless community in Moscow

nariadnik – in many Old Believer communities, the head of economic affairs

nastoiatel' (or *bol'shak*) – head of an Old Believer community; in Orthodoxy, head of a parish or church

Nektarii, Elder (1853–1928) – elder at Optina Pustyn' during early years of Soviet rule

Nil Sorskii (ca. 1433–1508) – monk of the Kirillov Monastery in Beloozero; emphasized the ascetic over the temporal in a number of important writings; founded a well-known *skit* (skete, scete)

obretenie – discovery (of relics)

Optina Pustyn' – most famous monastic hermitage in Russia in the 19th century; known especially for its tradition of elders

otkrovenie pomyslov – confession of thoughts (often daily to elders by their disciples)

Palamas, Gregory (ca. 1296–1359) – archbishop of Thessalonika (r. 1347–1359), canonized in 1368; known for defense of hesychasm

pamiat' – commemoration list

panikhida – requiem service

pastva – the parish flock

Paul of Aleppo (1627–1669) – son of Patriarch Makarios of Antioch (r. 1647–1672); author of a travelogue of their visit to Russia in the reign of Tsar Alexis

perelozhenie – moving remains of a saint to a more elaborate container

perepisnaia kniga – census or registry book

Philokalia (*Dobrotoliubie*) – multi-volume work compiled by Paisii Velichkovskii (1727–1794) of patristic texts; first Russian edition in 1793

Pilgrim Book (*Kniga Palomnik*) – written by Anthony, Archbishop of Novgorod; describes Constantinople in 1200

pistsovye knigi – census books

pokhvala – eulogy

poluraskol'niki – semi-dissenters

Pomortsy – one of the two largest Old Believer priestless groups

popechiteli – administrators/guardians of Old Believer communities

posadnik – appears in the sources from the 11th century on as an appointee of the prince assigned to govern a city; in Novgorod, the *veche*-appointed *posadnik* was the chief administrative official (*DRHT*)

Preobrazhensk Community – a major priestless Old Believer community in Moscow

razreshitel'nye gramoty – letters of absolution

razreshitel'nye molitvy – prayers of absolution

Rogozhsk Community – a major center of Old Belief in Moscow

samougodie – self-love

skhema (schema) – a cowl worn by a monk who has taken the highest vows

skhimnik – monk who has taken the strictest monastic vows; leads a secluded life with great emphasis on prayer

sinodik (synodikon) – liturgical listing of names to be read at church services; also *senanik*

skit (skete, scete) – small, remote monastic community/hermitage

smirenomudrie – a concept linking humility and wisdom

sobornost' – a concept (especially in 19th-century Slavophile thought) denoting society as strictly integral, organic, and united in a harmonious way with Orthodox spiritual foundations

soslovie (pl. *sosloviia*) – class of society, especially one that is grounded in legal definition.

starchestvo – the practice of eldering; guidance of spiritual pupils

Glossary

staritsy – female monastics (singular: *staritsa*)

startsy – male monastics (singular: *starets*); this term, as well as *staritsy* might have slightly different meanings in different communities, e.g. "elder" monastics

Stoglav Council – Council of a Hundred Chapters, 1551; codified regulations of the Church; elements of ritual practice, taxes, and educational levels of the clergy were addressed

Strigol'niki – 14th-century "heretics;" protested against worldliness of the church

stroitel' – Old Believer representative in the main cities

Sudebnik – legal code promulgated in 1550; affects some of the regulations of the Stoglav Council of 1551

sudogovorenie – court hearing

Tale of the White Cowl – late 16th-century text that justifies the Novgorod archbishop's claim to wear a white cowl

templon – a barrier between the sanctuary and nave, generally waist high and open above; usually had columns

theosis – deification of the human based in part on 2 Peter 1:4 "so that through these you might become sharers in the divine nature"; the doctrine "became a central pillar of Byzantine theology" (*BDEC*)

typikon – a manual of liturgical instructions and rules for the ecclesiastical year (*ODCC*)

tysiatskii – second highest official until the 15th century in Novgorod's administration, and until 1374 in the Muscovite administration; dominant duties in military, foreign relations, and judicial matters

umilenie – spiritual tenderness/emotion

ustav – a text that regulates monastic behavior: often a guide for daily life and often crafted for the specific monastery

ustavshchik – in Old Believer practice, the supervisor of the internal life of the community

vkladnye knigi – donation books

vybornye – electors in Old Believer communities

zhitiia – lives of saints

Abbreviations and Works Cited

BDEC = *The Blackwell Dictionary of Eastern Christianity*. Edited by Ken Parry, David J. Melling, Dimitri Brady, Sidney H. Griffith, and John F. Healey. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999.

DRHT = *Dictionary of Russian Historical Terms from the Eleventh Century to 1917*. Compiled by Sergei G. Pushkarev. Edited by George Vernadsky and Ralph T. Fisher, Jr. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970.

ODB = *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*. Alexander P. Kazhdan, editor in chief. 3 vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

ODCC = *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church.* Edited by F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Chronology of the Russian Orthodox Church (10th Century to 1917)

mid-10th c.	–	numerous Christians in early Rus' principalities; they have their own churches
945–962	–	rule of Ol'ga; first Christian ruler in Kiev
986	–	Volodimir/Vladimir visited in Kiev by envoys — Muslim Volga Bulgars, German Roman Catholics, Jewish Khazars, Orthodox Byzantines seeking to convert him to their religion
989	–	Christianization of Rus' by Volodimir/Vladimir; traditional date: 988
1015	–	Volodimir/Vladimir dies; murder of the brothers Boris and Gleb; first Rus'ian saints
1018	–	Iaroslav the Wise becomes prince of Kiev
1037	–	Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev is begun
1050–1054	–	Metropolitan Ilarion, reign of; his *Sermon on Law and Grace* (1047–1049)
1051	–	foundation of the Monastery of the Caves (Kievo-Pechersk Lavra) in Kiev
1051–1053	–	Iaroslav's *Church Statute* issued; lay judiciary excluded from ecclesiastical affairs
1054	–	Great Schism of Latin Christianity with that of the Orthodox East
1062	–	Iziaslav's Monastery of St. Dimitrii takes Varlaam from the Monastery of the Caves to be its first abbot
1073	–	death of St. Antonii (of the Monastery of the Caves)
1074	–	death of St . Feodosii (of the Monastery of the Caves)
1083–1088	–	Nestor writes the *Life of Our Venerable Father Feodosii*
1117	–	writing of the *Povest' vremennykh let* (*Tale of Bygone Years*) by Vasilii, a monk of the Monastery of the Caves— hagiographical text *Narrative and Passion and the Encomium of the Holy Martyrs Boris and Gleb* derives from it

Tapestry of Russian Christianity: Studies in History and Culture. Nickolas Lupinin, Donald Ostrowski and Jennifer B. Spock, eds. Columbus, Ohio: Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures and the Resource Center for Medieval Slavic Studies, The Ohio State University, 2016, xxxiv–xli.

1131–1156 – Bishop Nifont of Novgorod; gives answers to famous penitential text *Voproshenie Kirika (Questions of Kirik)*

1165 – Il'ia becomes first archbishop of Novgorod

1185 – Prince Vsevolod "Big-Nest" rejects the Kievan metropolitan's, Nikifor's, nominee for bishop of Rostov in favor of his own nominee, Luka

1192/93 – First Varlaam of Khutyn dies

1193–1197 – St. Dimitrii Cathedral in Vladimir is constructed

1199 – Sviatoslav Vsevolodovich appointed prince of Novgorod; Mitrofan becomes archbishop of Novgorod

1200 – Dobrynia Iadreikovich, the future Archbishop Antonii of Novgorod, travels to Constantinople

1204 – Fourth Crusade sacks Constantinople

1210 – Antonii chosen as archbishop of Novgorod to replace Mitrofan

1211 – Antonii consecrated as archbishop of Novgorod (first time)

1219 – Antonii steps down from the archiepiscopal position so Mitrofan can replace him

1223 – Archbishop Mitrofan dies

1225 – Antonii consecrated as archbishop of Novgorod (second time)

1228 – Antonii steps down from the archiepiscopal position because of ill health and returns to Khutyn Monastery

1232 – Antonii, former archbishop of Novgorod dies

1237–1240 – Mongol invasion of Rus'

1240 – Mongols sack Kiev

1243 – Second Varlaam of Khutyn dies

1250 – Kirill becomes metropolitan of Rus'

1261 – Constantinople recaptured by Greeks

1280/1 – Metropolitan Kirill dies

1282 – Maksim becomes metropolitan of Rus'

1284 – traditional date for canonization of Ol'ga and Vladimir—"equal to the apostles"

1299/1300 – Metropolitan Maksim moves to Vladimir-on-the-Kliazma

1305 – Metropolitan Maksim dies

1326 – Metropolitan Peter dies; Cathedral of the Assumption founded in Moscow

1330 – Savior of the Forest Church is built in Moscow

1332 – stone Church of the Archangel Michael replaces wooden one in the Moscow Kremlin; stone Church of St. John Climacus built in the Moscow Kremlin

1340 – Appoximate year of birth of Feofan Grek, icon painter

1347 – Grand Prince Semen pays cost of repairing St. Sophia Cathedral in Constantinople

1353 – Metropolitan Feognost dies

1359 – Metropolitan Aleksei becomes regent for Prince Dmitrii of Moscow

1360 – approximate year of birth of Andrei Rublev, icon painter

1378 – Feofan Grek decorates Church of the Transfiguration in Novgorod

1381 – Kiprian becomes metropolitan of Rus'

1385 – Metropolitan Kiprian travels to Sarai, capital of the Ulus of Jochi

1388 – Metropolitan Theognostus of Trebizond travels to Moscow seeking donations

1389 – Metropolitan Pimen dies;

1390 – Kiprian becomes metropolitan of Rus'

1392 – death of Sergei Radonezhskii, co-founder (with his brother Stefan) of the Holy Trinity Monastery near Moscow

1393 – Patriarch Antonios of Constantinople writes letter upbraiding Grand Prince Vasilii I

1406 – Metropolitan Kiprian dies

1408 – Fotii (Photius) becomes metropolitan of Rus'

1410 – approximate year of death of Feofan Grek, icon painter

1430 – approximate year of death of Andrei Rublev, icon painter, although 1428 is also commemorated

1431 – Metropolitan Fotii dies

1437 – Isidor appointed metropolitan of Rus'; beginning of the Council of Florence

1439 – Council of Florence ends

1441 – Metropolitan Isidor returns to Moscow; conducts church service in Catholic manner and is imprisoned

1443 – Isidor flees Moscow

1448 – council of bishops elects Iona as metropolitan of Rus'

1453 – fall of Constantinople to Ottoman Turks

1461 – Metropolitan Iona writes letter to Khan Mahmud of Kazan'; death of Metropolitan Iona; Feodosii becomes metropolitan

1464 – Metropolitan Feodosii resigns; Filipp becomes metropolitan

1468 – Ivan III refuses Pskov a separate bishop; Ivan III presents Great Zion to Assumption Cathedral

1473 – Metropolitan Filipp dies; Gerontii becomes metropolitan of Rus'

1489 – Cathedral of the Annunciation in the Moscow Kremlin is completed; death of Metropolitan Gerontii

1490 – Zosima becomes metropolitan; church council investigates charges of heresy

1492 – Metropolitan Zosima begins to refer to Ivan III as *samoderzhets* (autocrat)

1494 – Zosima resigns as metropolitan

1499 – Gennadii Bible is completed; Vassian Patrikeev tonsured

1503 – church council concerning widower priests and simony

1504 – leaders of Rus' heretics punished

1505 – new stone Church of the Archangel Michael is constructed in the Moscow Kremlin; Tsarevich Kudaikul converts to Christianity taking the baptismal name of Peter

1506 – Tsarevich Peter marries Elena Ivanovna, sister of Grand Prince Vasilii III

1508 – Nil Sorskii dies

1511 – Metropolitan Simon resigns; Varlaam becomes metropolitan

1515 – Iosif of Volokolamsk, hegumen of the Iosifov Monastery dies

1518 – Maksim Grek arrives in Moscow; Patriarch Theoleptos of Constantinople refers to Vasilii III using the term "tsar"

1521 – Metropolitan Varlaam resigns

1522 – Daniil becomes metropolitan of Rus'

1525 – first trial of Maksim Grek for heresy

1526 – Makarii becomes archbishop of Novgorod

1531 – trial of Vassian Patrikeev for heresy; second trial of Maksim Grek for heresy

1539 – Metropolitan Daniil is deposed; Ioasaf becomes metropolitan

1542 – Metropolitan Ioasaf is deposed; Makarii becomes metropolitan

1551 – Stoglav Council (Council of a Hundred Chapters) meets

1555 – "Sovereign's Genealogy" ("*Gosudarev rodoslovets*") compiled

1556 (Oct) – 1557 (Jan) – commemoration list (*pamiat'*) compiled at the behest of Ivan IV

1563 – Metropolitan Makarii dies;

1566 – Metropolitan Afanasii resigns; German becomes metropolitan for two days, then ousted; Filipp becomes metropolitan

1568 – Synod deposes Metropolitan Filipp; Kirill becomes metropolitan

1569 – former Metropolitan Filipp is murdered

1572 – church council decides Ivan IV can marry a fourth time, but imposes a penance on him; Metropolitan Kirill dies; Antonii becomes metropolitan

1573 – Tsar Sain Bulat converts to Christianity taking the name Simeon Bekbulatovich

1580 – monasteries agree at a church council to register all new land acquisitions with the crown in return for permission to keep all the lands they already held

1582 – Antonio Possevino visits Moscow as ambassador of Pope Gregory XIII

1583 – Synodikons sent by Ivan IV begin to arrive at monasteries

1586 – Metropolitan Dionisii is deposed; Iov becomes metropolitan

1589 – Patriarchate of Moscow established; Iov becomes first patriarch of Moscow

1613 – First Romanov ruler, Tsar Michael, elected by a *zemskii sobor* (council of the land)

1619 – Tsar Michael's father returns to Moscow from Polish imprisonment; becomes Patriarch Filaret and co-ruler of Muscovy

1631 – Znamenskii Monastery founded in Moscow on property donated by Tsar Michael

1633 – Patriarch Filaret dies

1642–1644 – completion of iconography of the Dormition (Uspenskii) Cathedral in the Moscow Kremlin

1645 – Peter Mohyla publishes his *Short Catechism* (*Sobranie kratkiia nauki ob artikulakh very)* in Kiev

1649 – Mohyla's *Short Catechism* reissued in Moscow; establishment of Monastyrskii Prikaz (Monastery Chancellery) in Moscow; Mohyla dies;

Nikon is chosen metropolitan of Novgorod

1650 – publication of Russian Nomocanon (*Kormchaia Kniga)*

1652 – Patriarch Iosif dies; Nikon is chosen patriarch; relics of former Metropolitan Filipp are brought to Moscow

1653 – church council begins instituting reforms; Ivan Neronov and Archpriest Avvakum are exiled; revised edition of *Russian Nomocanon* published; Printing Office publishes a Psalter; Tsar Alexis places Patriarch Nikon in charge of Printing Office

1654 – church council takes up correction of texts and revision of church manuals; Arsenii Sukhanov makes trip to Mt. Athos to buy books and manuscripts

1655 – church council takes up issue of book correction again; Patriarch Makarios of Antioch arrives in Moscow

1656 – church council supports Patriarch Nikon; Ivan Neronov is tried and condemned

1658 – Nikon leaves the patriarchal see in July

1660 – church council reaches inconclusive results concerning Patriarch Nikon; Avvakum is recalled from exile

1664 – Avvakum returns to Moscow from exile

1666–1667 – council deposes Patriarch Nikon but accepts his reforms

1668 – beginning of rebellion at Solovki Monastery against new reforms

1672 – Patriarch Ioasaf dies; Pitirim is chosen patriarch

1673 – Patriarch Pitirim dies

1674 – Ioakim is chosen patriarch

1677 – Monastery Chancellery is closed; Synodikon compiled by Tsar Fedor Alekseevich

1681 – former Patriarch Nikon dies; Avvakum is burned at the stake

1687 – Slaviano-Greek-Latin-Academy founded in Moscow; Likhudi brothers, Ioannikii and Sofronii, in charge

1690 – Patriarch Ioakim dies; Adrian is chosen patriarch

1700 – Patriarch Adrian dies

1701 – monasteries are obliged to give their revenues to the state

1721 – patriarchate is abolished; replaced by Holy Synod

1722–1794 – Paisii Velichkovskii, Saint

1724–1783 – Tikhon of Zadonsk, Saint

1727 – diocese of Irkutsk is founded

1742 – The Holy Trinity Seminary is founded; formation of the Moscow and St. Petersburg eparchies

1751 – corrected translation of the Bible (the Elizabeth Bible) issued in Moscow

1763 – trial of Metropolitan Arsenii (Matsievich)

1764 – decree of Catherine II on the secularization/confiscation of ecclesiastical properties

1771 – Archbishop Amvrosii of Moscow is murdered

1772 – Mogilev diocese (modern-day Belarus) is joined to the Russian Orthodox Church

1773 – a decree on religious toleration is issued

1782–1867 – Filaret Drozdov, metropolitan of Moscow and author

1788–1860 – Elder Makarii of Optina Pustyn'

1793 – first Russian edition of the *Philokalia*

1794 – first Russian missionaries arrive on Kodiak Island

1795–1865 – Elder Antonii of Optina Pustyn' (Optina Hermitage)

1795–1865 – Makarii Bulgakov: archbishop of Khar'kov, metropolitan of Moscow; prolific author of multi-volume works on the history of the Russian Church

1795–1867 – Elder Leonid of Optina Pustyn'

1796 – civil honors are introduced for clergy; clergy is also made exempt from corporal punishment

1799 – censorship of religious texts is separated from that of secular texts

1805 – publication of Metropolitan Platon's short history of the Russian Church

1807–1822 – religious mission in China headed by Archimandrite Iakinf (Bichurin)

1811 – formation of the Georgian exarchate within the Russian Orthodox Church

1812–1891 – Elder Amvrosii of Optina Pustyn'

1813 – founding of the Kishinev diocese; the Bible Society is established

1815 – Jesuits forbidden to enter St. Petersburg and Moscow

1815–1894 – Theophan the Recluse (Feofan Otshel'nik), Saint

1820 – translation of the New Testament into Russian is completed; Jesuits banned from Russia

1822–1891 – Archimandrite Leonid Kavelin (scholar)

1824 – Filaret (Drozdov's) "catechism" is published

1826 – the Bible Society is closed

1829 – founding of the Don diocese

1834 – founding of the Tomsk diocese

1842 – the Kazan' Theological Academy is opened

1865 – missionary society in St. Petersburg is organized

1867 – Metropolitan Filaret (Drozdov) dies

1870 – creation of an Orthodox mission to Japan headed by Fr. Nikolai Kasatkin

1876 – translation of the Bible into Russian is completed

1883 – some civil rights granted to Old Believers

1888 – 900-year anniversary of the Christianization of Russia is celebrated

1892 – diocese of Finland is organized with its seat in Vyborg; 500-year anniversary of the passing of St. Sergei Radonezhskii is commemorated

1901–1903 – religio-philosophical seminars in St. Petersburg held with the participation of leading Russian philosophers, chaired by Bishop Sergii (Stragorodskii)

1903 – Seraphim of Sarov is canonized

1904–1905 – First edition of *Tolkovaia Bibliia* published in journal *Strannik*

1905 – K. P. Pobedonostsev is fired as procurator of the Holy Synod

1908 – Archbishop Nikon, exarch of Georgia, is murdered

1909 – national monastic conference is held at Holy Trinity Monastery

1910 – All-Russian Old Believer congress

1913 – glorification of Patriarch Germogen

1917 – opening of the All-Russian Church Council

VLADIMIR'S CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY: DIVINE PROVIDENCE AND THE TAKING OF KHERSON

David K. Prestel

Но есть на небесѣхъ Богъ
откры̀вающии таины
Kniga Proroka Daniila II: 28

Есть въ царствѣ твоемь мужъ
въ которомъ духъ святаго Бога
Kniga Proroka Daniila V: 11[1]

In the *Rus' Primary Chronicle* (*Povest' vremennykh let*) under the year 6494 (986) we read that the pagan Prince Vladimir of Rus' was visited by proselytizing delegations from the Muslim Volga Bulgars, German Roman Catholics, Jewish Khazars, and Orthodox

[1] *Tolkovaia Bibliia.* "But there is in heaven, a God revealing mysteries"; "There is in your kingdom a man, in whom is the spirit of the Holy God." [All translations of the *Primary Chronicle* in this study are the author's.] The first edition of this Bible was published in Saint Petersburg from 1904 through 1913 as a supplement to the journal, *Strannik*. The second edition came out in 1987 through the Institute for Bible Translation, Stockholm. The second edition is in three volumes and the quotations from Daniel are in vol. 2.

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Byzantines.[2] The Greek representative, who is called a "filosof," begins with a short criticism of the faiths represented by each of the preceding delegations and then launches into a rather lengthy summary of biblical history, which encompasses human experience from Creation to the Last Judgment.[3] Although the summary has been described as a chronological history that moves from the beginning of time to the end of the world, a closer look reveals that this is not entirely accurate.[4]

In a manner common to conversion accounts, the philosopher's summary is actually constructed in dialogue form with the Greek responding to questions posed by Vladimir.[5] In the first

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[2] *PVL,* 84,17–106,14. It is often referred to as the *Primary Chronicle,* as will be done in this study. The shortened form "*PVL*" will be used to refer to the collation and paradosis of 2003 (see "Works Cited"). The numbers after "*PVL*" represent the column and line numbers of that edition. It is possible that the story of the foreign delegations is a later interpolation for, as S. H. Cross points out, the distinction between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches expressed here is most likely an anachronism, because the Schism of 1054, which separated the two churches, was still several decades in the future when these visits took place. Cross, however, seems to overstate the differences between Byzantine and Catholic Christianity noted in the text, as there is certainly no claim that the two differ as much between themselves as they both do from Islam and Judaism. Indeed, the Greek "philosopher" clearly states that the Roman faith "съ нами мало разъѣщенѣ," ("with us it differs little," part 1, lines 86: 25–26). See Cross, *Russian Primary Chronicle,* 245n92.

[3] *PVL,* 86,8–106,14. For a discussion of possible influences on the "Philosopher's Speech," which he considers an independent work of the chronicler, see Shakhmatov, "Povest' vremmennykh let," 122–149.

[4] For example, Petro Bilaniuk calls the speech a catechesis that "begins with an account of the creation of the world and includes a summary of the major events of the history of salvation, Old Testament prophecies, and their fulfillment in the New Testament." Bilaniuk, "Laurentian Chronicle," 93.

[5] The account of the conversion of Saul (St. Paul) in Acts 9 is a likely model, though Saul's questions are quite brief, as are the responses of Jesus. Dialogue is implicit in biblical religion. Amos Wilder writes that it "takes us to the heart of biblical religion, namely prayer itself," *Early Christian Rhetoric,* 45. Further, W. Reed notes that "the dialogic form is a fundamental characteristic of the Jewish and Christian writings as they represent a dramatically interactive communication between remarkably different levels of existence, between a strikingly transcendent God and the notably earthbound people to whom he speaks." Reed, *Dialogues of*

question, Vladimir inquires whether it is true, as the Jewish Khazars stated, that the Greeks and the Germans worship one whom the Jews had crucified. The philosopher replies that this was indeed the case, for the prophets, whom the Jews had killed, had said that God would become incarnate and would be crucified, buried, and resurrected and would rise on the third day from the dead; and further, referring to the events of AD 70, that God had punished Israel for its unbelief by allowing the Romans to destroy the cities and by scattering the nation among the peoples of the world. Vladimir then asks why God came to earth and suffered such pain. The philosopher replies that if Vladimir wants to hear the story, he will tell it from the beginning and commences his account of human history with the creation of heaven and earth as given in Genesis.[6] Although the account is presented chronologically, from this point on, its true beginning, initiated by Vladimir's question, is the Incarnation, that is, Christ's coming in the flesh, and his resultant death and resurrection, which identifies the philosopher's summary as *Heilsgeschichte* or salvation history.[7] In this view, all history is God's revelation of his plan of salvation.[8]

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the Word, 36. The naiveté of the pagan Vladimir's questions, although at times theologically astute, emphasizes his earthbound nature. As Bilaniuk points out ("Laurentian Chronicle," 94), the philosopher's speech is patterned after the catechism of the protodeacon and martyr, Stephen, in Acts 7. Stephen's defense at his trial was not, strictly speaking, a dialogue, as the entire speech was in response to a single question from the high priest concerning whether the testimony of the witnesses against him was true. Though similar in spirit, the two accounts are quite different in the events from salvation history that are presented. They share, however, the Christian conviction that all history culminates in Jesus Christ.

[6] *PVL*, beginning with 87,23.

[7] In the flesh (*en sarki*) here simply denotes the earthly existence of Jesus (I John 4:2). A good source for *Heilsgeschichte* is Cullmann, *Christ and Time*. The term "salvation history" is not used in the New Testament, but its core meaning is expressed by "oikonomia" (dispensatio) as it is used in Ephesians 1:10 and 3:9 to designate God's "plan of salvation." The word "Heilsgeschichte" as used by Cullmann is rather controversial among theologians as he himself has acknowledged, *Heil als Geschichte*, 56–60. Here it is used in its general Christian sense: God's plan of salvation as presented in Scripture.

[8] A very similar version in Russian of the "redemptive history" section of this paper (pp. 4–11) appeared in 2011 in my article, "Plody provideniia: iazycheskaia i sviashchennaia istoriia v Povesti vremennykh let," *Rossica antiqua* (2011/2): 26–33. In both articles a basic explication of the

Past events had occurred according to the purposes of God and contained messages that require interpretation. Similarities between events revealed the divine plan for humanity and led to a "detemporalization" of historical events.[9] For Christian thinkers from the early church fathers on, there are two defining events in human history, the Garden of Eden and the Cross.[10] Once humans used their freedom against their creator and fell into sin, salvation history becomes an account of transgressions and rebellion on the one side, and God's mercy and just discipline on the other. In his providence, God's ultimate purpose, which is accomplished in the Incarnation, is to reconcile humankind with its Creator. According to salvation history, the trials and difficulties faced by humanity are actually acts of mercy, for instead of the destruction they deserve, humans are given numerous opportunities to practice the repentance that will lead to redemption.[11] The biblical history that the philosopher relates to Vladimir differs from secular history in that the events that it recounts are not important in themselves, but are significant only as they reflect salvation history, that is, as they reveal either a turning to or a turning away from God.[12] In addition, however, there is another theme that is developed throughout the account. God chose Abraham to be the progenitor of his chosen people and he blessed them despite their frequent unfaithfulness. Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, and Solomon were provided to lead God's people, but despite the wisdom and leadership of these rulers, the people

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workings of *Heilsgeschichte* serves as a context for interpreting other parts of the *PVL*.

[9] Goetz, "Concept of Time," 164–165.

[10] Löwith, *Meaning in History*, 172. The qualification must be made that there are two significant events in human history up to the present time. Christian sacred history as a whole, however, has a beginning, middle, and end, which is Christ's coming in glory to set up his kingdom (*parousia*) (181).

[11] Löwith, *Meaning in History*, 183–184. Gregory of Nyssa saw time as a "perpetual movement toward a different state," which could be either good or evil. As it is worked out in God's plan (*oikonomia*), it is always directed toward the good," as quoted in Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture,* 118. For the views of time in providence for the Cappadocians in general see ibid., 114–119.

[12] In contrast to secular history, in redemptive history it is not criteria established by humans that are significant, for it is by divine selection that a particular event becomes a "point in time" (*kairos*), Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, 39.

continued in sin and, under Rehoboam, Solomon's son, the kingdom was divided into two parts. In the northern part under Jereboam the people worshipped golden calves and in the south Baal worship was once again practiced. God sent prophets to warn his people of their sin, but the people did not listen and began to kill his messengers. Because of Israel's rejection, God spoke through the prophets and warned that He would reject Israel and, quoting Malachi 1.11, "from the east to the west my name will be glorified among the nations [Gentiles–DP]... In every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering, for my name is great among the nations."[13] In this section the philosopher cites a rather large number of biblical prophesies, which prompts Vladimir to ask when they will be fulfilled. The philosopher answers, "All this was accomplished earlier when God became flesh."[14] This is the central event in salvation history, fulfilling promises made previously and thus becoming what Karl Löwith calls a *perfectum praesens* for all that occurs subsequently.[15] For the chroniclers, the Rus' are, of course, among the peoples to whom God's grace and redemption are to be revealed and the Incarnation, an event that occurred almost a thousand years previously, demands a response from Vladimir. His subsequent actions leading up to the conversion, as recorded in the *Primary Chronicle*, should, therefore, be viewed within the context of the philosopher's account of sacred history. In this study we will examine the *Primary Chronicle* story of the conversion of Vladimir, and in particular the account of the taking of Kherson, in the light of salvation history and the Christian concept of divine providence.[16] In doing so I hope to demonstrate that the Kherson legend, long considered to be a clumsy melding of contradictory versions, actually plays an important role in the

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[13] "Отъ востока и до запада имя мое прослави ся въ языцѣхъ. И на вьсякомь мѣстѣ приносить ся кадило имени моему и жьртва чиста, зане велие имя въ языцѣхъ" *PVL*, 98,23–98,27.

[14] "яко уже преже съ бысть ся вьсе, егда Богъ въплъти ся." *PVL*, 101,28.

[15] Löwith, *Meaning in History*, 182.

[16] The "Legend of Kherson" ("Korsunskaia legenda") has been much discussed by investigators. A. A. Shakhmatov, because of internal contradictions in the text, sees the *Chronicle* version as a rather clumsy combination of differing accounts of the conversion. Shakhmatov, *Razyskaniia,* 133–161. Also see Likhachev, *Povest' vremennykh let*, 2: 335–337; Müller, "Die Chronik-Erzählung," 430–448. Müller sees the *Primary Chronicle* version as a combination of two sources, the "Korsun Legend" and what he calls the "Mission Legend."

chroniclers' attempt to locate significant events of Rus' history within the broader coordinates of salvation history.

For Maximus Confessor (whom Jaroslav Pelikan calls the principal exponent of Orthodox spirituality in the seventh century, and John Meyendorff, the "father of Byzantine theology"), the world, though it exists as a separate reality outside of God, is still the recipient of his love and providence (*pronoia*).[17] In this sense the world is not autonomous, but "was created in order to participate in God," who is the principle, the center and the end: the principle through creation, the center through providence, and the end through conclusion.[18] After the creation of the world and of mankind, which God pronounced to be good, God gave control over His creation to Adam, but he chose to submit to the world instead of to God. In an interpretation used by both Maximus and Gregory of Nyssa, the reference in Genesis 3:21 to the "garments of skin," which were given to Adam and Eve after the Fall, is to humankind's new situation, in which the animal side of human nature causes people to become the captives of their material senses and thus separated from God.[19] God's providence is still operative in the world, but it is now contextualized in the history of Israel in the Old Testament and in the ongoing history of the church after the Incarnation. After the Fall, God's purpose is to continue to actively participate in human history through human agents, in both an individual and corporate sense, who respond positively to his calling or reject it. It is the story of the positive agents that the Greek philosopher records in his account, but his is not the only instance of salvation history in the *Primary Chronicle,* for, in an abbreviated form, God's plan, especially as it affects the Gentile nations, is the subject of the opening story "отъкуду есть пошла руская земля" which begins the collection.[20]

The opening seems to be intended to provide a link between biblical salvation history and the history of Kievan Rus; it seeks to demonstrate how Rus' fits into God's plan for salvation.[21]

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[17] See Pelikan's "Introduction" to *Maximus Confessor,* 131.

[18] This is my paraphrase of a quotation from Maximus in Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology,* 134.

[19] Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 135.

[20] *PVL*, 0,2–0,3. "whence came the Rus' land." See also Eremin, *Lektsii*, 38.

[21] As Simon Franklin points out, for the compilers of the *Primary Chronicle,* the past was a constant source of authority: "It was an indispensable part of their mythmaking designs and methods," Franklin, "Borrowed Time," 165.

It contains quotations from a number of different sources, but the first part parallels rather closely the *Chronicle* of George Hamartolos, as it describes the division of the world among the three sons of Noah: Shem, Ham and Japheth.[22] The region given to the descendants of each son is then described, as is the origin of the world's languages through the linguistic dispersion, which took place at Babel. After this brief introduction, attention quickly shifts to the Slavs and more particularly to the Polianians.

The Incarnation ushered in the times of the Gentiles as prophesied by the Old Testament prophets, and the chroniclers take special care to provide apostolic origins for Rus' Christianity. St. Andrew, teaching near Sinope in what is now Turkey and from there crossing the Black Sea to Kherson, sailed up the Dnieper to the future site of Kiev, where he blessed the hill on which the city was to be founded and set up a cross. As noted above, for Orthodox theologians, after the Fall, the world, originally created by God as perfect, became a place of confinement for humankind in which the devil was able to establish his wicked rule. Through the sanctification (blessing) of material objects and places, the Orthodox Church sought to reestablish created things in their true relationship to God.[23] In addition to claims of an apostolic foundation for the Rus' Church, the chroniclers apparently want to demonstrate in this passage that God's providence had set aside Kiev as a holy place, almost a millennium before Christianity was accepted by Vladimir.[24] In addition, God's providential work did not cease to affect the Polianians, the eventual inhabitants of Kiev and the corporate beneficiaries of God's grace. In the account of the founding of Kiev by Kii, Shchek, and Khoriv, we are told that they are "wise and judicious; and are called Polianians, and from them there are Polianians in Kiev until now."[25] Later, in a rather lengthy

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[22] *Khronika Georgiia Amartola,* 58. For the citations from Hamartolos see Tvorogov, "Povest' vremennykh let," 99–113. Other sources are quoted as well including John Malalas, Anastasius of Sinai, Michael Syncellus, and the pseudo-Methodius of Patara: see Simon Franklin, "Some Apocryphal Sources," 1–27; A. A. Shakhmatov, "Povest' vremennykh let," 11–150; and Ranchin, "Khronika Georgiia Amartola," 52–69.

[23] Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology,* 135.

[24] See Dvornik, *Idea of Apostolicity,* 263–264; Bilaniuk, "Laurentian Chronicle," 86–88; and Podskalsky, *Christentum und theologische Literatur,* 11–13.

[25] "бѣхуть бо мудри и смыслѣи и нарицаху ся Поляне отъ нихъ же Поляне Кыеве и до сего дне." *PVL,* 9,19–9,21.

description of the various East Slavic tribes, we are told that each of them kept their own customs and laws, but that they, in contrast to the Derevlians, who lived as animals, and to other tribes, the Polianians kept the peaceful customs of their fathers and showed respect for their daughters-in-law, sisters, and mothers.[26] God's providence could also be revealed through other non-Christian peoples. When the Khazars demand tribute, the Polianians pay with a sword from each household. The Khazar leadership, however, is disturbed when they see the double-edged swords, as their weapons have only a single edge. They predict that they would soon be paying tribute to the Polianians. Significantly, the chronicler adds: "All this has occurred because they spoke not by their own will, but by God's command."[27]

Divine providence, of course, could benefit a people before their conversion to Christianity, for as Eusebius records in his *Ecclesiastical History*, Constantine the Great commemorated his victory over Maxentius at the Milvian bridge by erecting a monument with an inscription stating that by the sign of the cross, he had saved the city from a tyrant and had "restored to their ancient fame and splendor both the senate and the people of Rome."[28] Although Constantine's conversion opened a radically new era, because of the working of divine providence, there was continuity between the noble practices of ancient Rome and the new Christian era.[29] It appears likely that the chroniclers similarly wished to demonstrate that God's providence is evident even in the pagan history of Rus' and that a line of continuity stretches from the apostolic blessing of Kiev, through the noble practices of the Polianians, who are more favored than other tribes, to the eventual conversion of Vladimir.

As time progressed, the chroniclers demonstrated that God in his providence continued to bless the Kievan state. Its territory was expanded through the reigns of Oleg, Igor', and Sviatoslav, and Igor's wife, Ol'ga, even became a Christian.[30] Ol'ga's grandson, Vladimir, however, gained the throne through the murder of his brother Iaropolk and the first years of his reign were hardly

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[26] *PVL*, 13,7–13,15.

[27] *PVL*, 17,14–15. See also Bilaniuk, "Laurentian Chronicle," 92.

[28] Eusebius, *History*, 370–371.

[29] Pelikan, *Mystery of Continuity*, 2.

[30] In terms of providence and, in actual fact, the baptism of Rus' was prepared for at least two generations before Vladimir. See Sverdlov, *Domongol'skaia Rus'*, 207–216.

auspicious. He presided over a pagan resurgence, which resulted in the death of Christians, and was renowned for his sexual indulgence. In the number of his wives and concubines he is compared to King Solomon, but with the distinction that Solomon, though wise, came to ruin in the end, while Vladimir, though at first deluded, eventually found salvation and led the Rus' to conversion. This contrast is consistent with the development of salvation history. As O. Cullman states:

> the history of salvation up to Christ unfolds... as a progressive reduction: mankind – the people of Israel – the remnant of Israel – the One, Christ... From that point, however, there appears an important change with respect to the principle of movement, which we have discerned... Rather, all further development unfolds so that from the center reached in the Resurrection of Christ the way no longer leads from the many to the One, but on the contrary, from the One, in progressive advance, to the many.[31]

Vladimir thus becomes a sort of reverse Solomon and the history of Rus' becomes a mirror image of the history of Israel, for rather than passing from light to darkness, Rus' by God's grace goes from darkness to light.

The chroniclers have begun speaking at this point of the conversion of Vladimir, but it seems, nonetheless, very strange that God would choose to work through the agency of a sinner such as the prince. Providence, as it is often depicted in Scripture, however, seldom follows a predictable course. Löwith notes that "unexpected accidents slip in and unthought-of occurrences intervene."[32] A contemporary theologian, E. Frank Tupper, points out that providence is often "scandalous," and uses the birth of Jesus as an example. Joseph's line of descent as presented in the Gospel of Matthew includes such questionable figures as Tamar, who played the harlot with her father-in-law Judah, Rahab the harlot of Jericho, Ruth the Moabitess, a despised people, and Bathsheba (the wife of Uriah), who had an adulterous relationship with David that resulted in her husband's death in battle by David's order. Thus, "schemers, harlots, adulterers—these women foreshadowed the role of the Virgin Mary, whose pregnancy constituted a scandal: She had not lived with her husband."[33] These women all participated actively in events that were subsequently used

[31] Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, 115–116.
[32] Löwith, *Meaning in History*, 253–254n8.
[33] Tupper, *Scandalous Providence,* 96.

to advance God's purposes. Their participation, moreover, illustrates the concurrence that functions when God acts in collaboration with human agents. Vladimir, too, was the unlikely choice of what we might again call "scandalous" providence. Not only was he a great sinner, but he was also of questionable birth. His mother was Malusha, the daughter of Malok/Malk of Liubech and the *kliuchnitsa* ("housekeeper") of Princess Ol'ga, but whatever that rank might signify, Rogneda, the daughter of Rogvolod of Polotsk, calls Vladimir the son of a slave when she rejects his marriage proposal.[34] Despite these numerous negative factors, Vladimir comes eventually to be receptive to divine initiative and accepts baptism. This acceptance is neither immediate nor simple, however, and the remainder of my analysis examines how the chroniclers describe the concurrence of God's purposeful action and Vladimir's receptivity to it.

From the chroniclers' perspective, the death of the Varangian martyrs was the low point in Vladimir's reign. It is followed, however, by quotations from the prophet Hosea and the Psalter affirming God's decision to proclaim the Gospel to the Gentiles, as well as by commentary to the effect that the devil, who has long considered Rus' his own, will soon lose it, for although the apostles had not been in Rus', their teachings spread throughout the world in the churches.[35] It is at this point that the account of the conver-

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[34] *PVL,* 75,28–76,2. Rogneda's supposed words were "Не хощю розути робичича" ("I do not wish to take off the footwear of a slave's son"). Andrzej Poppe calls Malusha the housekeeper of Ol'ga and the concubine of Sviatoslav, who was from "an unfree court attendant's family," Poppe, "Christianization and Ecclesiastical Structure," 333. In terms of providence there are similarities here with Gideon, who delivered Israel from the Midianites after a prolonged period of repression. Gideon himself expresses his unworthiness by noting that his family is the least in Manasseh and he is the youngest among them. He then has God prove his intentions through a series of tests (Judges 6).

[35] *PVL,* 83,16–83,22. The quotation is from Hosea 2:23, which actually deals with the restoration of Israel. Here, however, it is clearly used to refer to the Gentiles (more specifically, Rus'). There seems to be a contradiction in the reference to the apostles. Earlier in the *Primary Chronicle*, as we have seen, there is an account of the Apostle Andrew's journey to Rus'. Here, no apostolic visit is acknowledged. It is possible, as Müller maintains in *Die Taufe Russlands,* that the passage about the Apostle Andrew was added in the latter part of the 11th century, particularly as Ilarion, in his *Slovo o zakone i blagodati,* makes no mention of it. See also Vodoff, *Naissance,* 291–294 and Poppe, "Christianization and Ecclesiastical Structure," 335–336. I should note that Demin maintains that there is no contradiction between the two entries as Andrew did

sion of Vladimir begins. The next entry is the visit of the various religious delegations described at the start of this article. Then we move from corporate providence, which had been visited on the Rus' nation from apostolic times, to individual providence, through which Prince Vladimir is called to repentance and baptism. The first step, then, is the series of religious visits culminating in the philosopher's speech. Vladimir is affected by the speech, especially the image of the Last Judgment with which it concludes, but in the end he refuses baptism because he wants to inquire more fully into the other faiths before making his decision. His boyars advise him to send his own people to examine each of the faiths, in order to get an unbiased view of their worship, and therefore, he sends delegations to the Bulgars, Germans and Greeks.[36] When the delegations return, the only positive report comes from the delegation that visited Constantinople, for they say that God truly dwelt there among men. When the reports are completed, the boyars state that if the Christian faith were bad, it would not have been accepted by Vladimir's grandmother, Olga, who was "моудрѣишии всѣхъ человѣкъ" ("who was wiser than all men"). Vladimir then asks his boyars where they should accept baptism, and they reply, "Wherever it pleases you."[37]

Without further elaboration, we are told that after a year had passed, Vladimir attacked the Greek city of Kherson. There is no motivation for the attack given in the text. We are informed only that Vladimir moves against the city with an armed force and the people barricade themselves inside. The siege threatens to be longstanding, but suddenly, one of the inhabitants, Anastasius by name, shoots an arrow on which were written directions for locating the city's water supply. At this moment, Vladimir looks to heaven and says that if the city is taken, he will accept baptism. Vladimir then cuts off the water supply, and the city falls.[38]

The passage describing the siege of Kherson presents many difficulties, not the least of which is the question of why Vladimir would attack Kherson when so recently he had been favorably disposed to the Greeks and their religion. In addition, we must ask

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not teach Slavs during his trip and had, in fact, little to do with them, "Zametki po personologii," 54. For the relation of the chroniclers' account to Ilarion's *Slovo* and what I consider to be a successful reconciliation of the two versions, see Poppe, "Two Concepts," 497–500.

[36] *PVL*, 107,2–108,29

[37] *PVL*, 108,26–108,30.

[38] *PVL*, 109,17–109,23.

the related question: why Vladimir would expect the Christian God to help him conquer a Christian city? Poppe has convincingly proposed that the sequence of events described in the *Primary Chronicle* should be revised in rough correspondence to a contrasting account in the *Pamiat' i pokhvala* of Iakov Mnikh 11th–14th centuries), for it is more likely that Vladimir was baptized in Kiev on Epiphany in 6495 (January 6, 988), traveled to the Dnieper rapids to greet his bride, Anna Porphyrogenita, in the summer of 988 (6496), and then in 989 (6497) took Kherson, which was held by the rebel, Bardas Phocas, in fulfillment of his promise to Basil II.[39] This version certainly makes more historical sense than the rather clumsy rendition found in the *Primary Chronicle*, but I would submit that in the context of salvation history, the *Primary Chronicle* account of the conversion also achieves some consistency.[40] As we have seen, the role of Rus' within God's providential plan is linked in the beginning of the *Primary Chronicle* with the extension of the Gospel message to the descendants of Japheth, and later God worked providentially throughout the history of Rus' to prepare the people for baptism. The providential model for conversion itself, however, is provided by the philosopher's speech, placed near the beginning of the conversion account. It is here, therefore, that we should look for some answers to the puzzling questions surrounding the Kherson legend.[41]

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[39] Poppe, "Political Background," 238–244; see also Poppe, "Christianization and Ecclesiastical Structure," 329–334. Nothing is known about Iakov Mnikh beyond that he claimed twice at the beginning of the *Pamiat' i pokhvala* to be the author/compiler. Who he was and when he wrote has been the subject of a great deal of speculation, but to my knowledge, no real evidence has been put forward.

[40] Poppe writes: "For the author-compiler of the *Primary Chronicle,* the Kherson version was most reliable because it presented the most providential view of the conversion of Rus'. But as the author-compiler himself acknowledged, he was acquainted with the other versions, which were probably as brief and prosaic as the records in the 'Memory and Eulogy'," "Political Background," 242; and Vodoff, *Naissance*, 62.

[41] Other explanations have been offered by Francis Butler and M. N. Virolainen. Butler writes that the chronicler wanted to present Vladimir as a brilliant innovator and as the ruler of a great and independent land. "The account as it stands underlines both of these characteristics. Vladimir has the good sense to accept the philosopher's arguments and the advice of his emissaries, but he is not so weak as merely to accept the Greek religion. Instead he seizes it by force," Butler, *Enlightener of Rus',* 41–49. Virolainen compares the "Kherson Legend" to the tale about

First of all, according to the philosopher, God works through nations, but in addition, throughout the history of Israel, he selected in each generation an individual, like Moses, Samuel, or David, who served as the agent of divine will. The philosopher addresses his speech to Vladimir, who clearly is the agent for Rus', but the timing is according to a divine plan that is known only to God and cannot be hurried. The image of the Last Judgment that concludes the speech affects Vladimir, for we are told that he sighs when he sees those going to Hell depicted, but he is not yet ready to act.[42] The second significant modeling element we find in the speech is the emphasis on the times of the Gentiles. At one point we are told that the story of Gideon and the fleece serves as a type for the baptism of the Gentiles, for Gideon put the fleece on the ground to test God and it remained dry while the rest of the earth was wet and then became wet while everything else was dry. The miracle signifies that at first there was dryness among the Gentiles while the Jews were wet, but later the Gentiles possessed the dew while the Jews were dry.[43] The philosopher presents this typological interpretation just before his depiction of the Last Judgment. The decision at this point is clearly Vladimir's, but he chooses to test God as Gideon did, and a year later he makes his baptism contingent upon God's granting him victory over Kherson. Vladimir's testing of God is similar to that of Gideon's, as they both occur in a battle situation in which they are given victory only with God's support. Vladimir also resembles Gideon in that they both destroy the idols that their people worship in place of God.[44] In a reversal typical of the diptych of salvation history, however, Gideon destroyed the idols to Baal

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Vladimir's conquest of Polotsk and his marriage to Rogneda. The order of events in the "Legend," which is similar to that in Rogneda's tale, is determined by a folklore code, which reflects an accepted tradition and system of meaning, "Avtor teksta istorii," 33–52. Both factors may have played some role in the chroniclers' selection and ordering of the material, but I would submit that a desire to highlight the role of providence is primary.

[42] *PVL,* 106,8–106,12.

[43] *PVL,* 105,11–105,20. The victory of Gideon over the Midianites and Amalekites is clearly an act of providence, as Gideon is instructed to reduce his large army to three hundred men, and yet is still victorious over a great multitude of the enemy, Judges 7.

[44] Gideon was called Jerubbaal because he destroyed the altar of Baal, Judges 6: 27–32.

before the test, and Vladimir only after God supported him and he was converted.

The third important element in the philosopher's account that we should note is its focus on the Incarnation. As remarked earlier, references to Christ's birth, death, and resurrection open the account and Old Testament prophecies are used throughout to highlight it. The philosopher spends a significant amount of time on the Gospel story, and all Vladimir's questions concern the Incarnation, demonstrating that he understands the Christian Gospel and must now decide whether he should receive it. We should note also that in the philosopher's speech Vladimir's last question is: "why was he (Christ) born of a woman, crucified on a tree, and baptized with water?"[45] The question is, in a certain sense, theologically subtle, but more significantly for our purposes it recognizes what I called earlier the often "scandalous" nature of providence, for none of these experiences are what one would expect of God's work in the world.[46] This "scandalous" side of providence is also present in Vladimir's first question to the philosopher, when he quotes the Khazar Jewish delegation and asks whether it is true, as they claimed, that the Greeks and Germans worship one whom the Jews crucified.[47] As noted above, the Greek affirms the fact and then uses it as a basis for his presentation of salvation history. The focus on the Incarnation brings us to the decisive moment. Vladimir must accept or reject Orthodoxy, but the question remains: how is the conversion to be worked out?

As mentioned earlier, at the beginning of the Kherson legend, it is already apparent that Vladimir is God's agent, but the work of providence is presented in the Bible and tradition as the concurrence of human action and the purpose of God. The taking of Kherson provides Vladimir with the conditions in which this concurrence can occur. As in the story of Gideon and the fleece, there is a sense that the events take place outside of time and place. The laconic phrase "and when a year had passed" (и минувъшю лѣту),

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[45] "Что ради отъ жены роди ся и на древѣ распятъ ся, и водою крьстися?" *PVL,* 104,19–104,20.

[46] Although naïve in Christian terms, Vladimir's questions are not what have been called "inept questions" in controversy dialogues, as they are not answered by additional questions, but are constructed in such a way as to elicit theological explanations. See Prestel, "They Seeing See Not," 223–234; and Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 12–27.

[47] *PVL,* 87,4–87,6.

coupled with the fact that no motivation or explanation for the attack is provided, gives a transcendent aura to the account and focuses attention on the encounter between Vladimir and God.[48] That a Christian city is attacked is consistent with the frequently "scandalous" nature of providence and indicates that God is able to take the actions of men and turn them to good purpose.[49] Anastasius, who provides the information about the water supply, is a Christian and is an instrument of providence; he is taken to Kiev later by Vladimir and serves the church there. The scandalous side of providential activity is also an important part of one of the most important conversions in the New Testament church, that of St. Paul, and there are several parallels we should note between his experience and that of Vladimir.[50]

First, Paul was a great sinner who persecuted the early Christian church and participated in the martyrdom of St. Stephen. He was traveling to Damascus to capture Christians and bring them to Jerusalem when Christ appeared to him in a vision of light, which blinded him. He was taken into the city, where he only regained his sight after a Christian, Ananias, laid his hand on him.[51] Vladimir, as we have seen, was also a great sinner, whose conversion was precipitated as he was in the process of moving against Christians. Although he did not experience a vision during the siege of Kherson, after he had taken the city he did suffer blindness, which, the chroniclers state occurred through divine providence. Prior to this he had sent word to the Greek Emperors Basil and Constantine that he wished to marry their sister. The emperors replied that this would only be possible if Vladimir accepted Christianity. He indicated that he was ready and the princess was sent to Kherson. When she arrived she told him that his blindness would only

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[48] *PVL,* 109,1.

[49] Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good for them that love God" (Authorized Version).

[50] Earlier the chronicler refers to the Apostle Paul as the teacher of the Slavs, and thus of the Rus', and this concept merges in the *Primary Chronicle* with the legend of the apostolic visit to Kiev of Andrew to establish apostolic agency in the conversion of Rus'. Poppe writes: "According to the chronicler's conception, Christ, by the agency of the apostles, had already written the Slavs and the land of Rus' into the history of salvation," Poppe, "Christianization and Ecclesiastical Structure," 336. Also see Poppe, "Two Concepts," 500–501.

[51] Acts 9:17.

be cured upon baptism. He hastened to be baptized and when the Bishop of Kherson laid his hand on Vladimir, the latter immediately recovered his sight, as did Paul at the hand of Ananias.[52] Again we see, in addition to the similarities to St. Paul, typological references to the Old Testament in the form of reverse parallels with Solomon, for just as Solomon was at first virtuous but subsequently led astray by his foreign-born wives, Vladimir was at first a womanizer who was led to baptism by a Christian wife (but also foreign born).

The account of Vladimir's baptism in the *Primary Chronicle* is followed by a refutation of the claim that Vladimir was baptized in Kiev or Vasiliev, and then by a short catechism, presented to Vladimir by priests to protect him against heresy.[53] Perhaps most significantly, Vladimir's successful attack on a Christian city, which was accomplished through divine aid, is brought to a providential conclusion, for we are told that Vladimir gave Kherson back to the Greeks as a wedding payment for his wife.[54]

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In summary, I think that there is significant evidence that one of the chroniclers' major goals, particularly in the depiction of Vladimir's conversion, was to integrate the history—the salvation history—of Rus' into biblical salvation history. For the benefit of Rus', God in his providence conferred an apostolic blessing

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[52] *PVL*, 111,12–11,15. Some medieval writers, for example, Iakov Mnikh and Ilarion, have made comparisons with the Emperor Constantine, who was also cured of an illness at baptism. For similarities and differences with Constantine see Ranchin, "Khronika Georgiia Amartola," 52–69.

[53] Podskalsky points out that despite the expressed purpose of this confession to protect Vladimir from heresy, an error has crept in, perhaps from a miscopying or a mistranslation of the Greek. The Son is said to be *podobnosushchen* with the Father, rather than *edinosushchen* (of like nature rather than of the same nature, or consubstantial). Podskalsky, "Principal Aspects," 20n90). The Greek terms are *homoiousios* and *homoousios*. The former is a compromise position that came to be associated with Arianism. See *PVL,* 112,16–17 and 112,19. For further treatment of this issue as well as a broader discussion of Arianism in the theological thought of Kievan Rus' see Podskalsky, "Principal Aspects," 271–274.

[54] Once again we see evidence of the *skandalon* of salvation history, for, as Poppe notes, instead of receiving punishment, Kherson is shown to be blessed by God as the Rus' ruler's baptismal site, "How the Conversion," 301.

through the Apostle Andrew, which did not come to full fruition for close to a thousand years. Even during that time, however, providence was visited on Rus' through the divine encouragement and blessing of the more benevolent and virtuous Polianians, through the growth of the Kievan state, and by the conversion of Ol'ga. The reign of Vladimir appears at first to be a setback for Christianity, but the often peculiar working of providence results in the "great sinner" moving toward repentance and conversion. The philosopher's speech sets the course for Vladimir's conversion in at least three ways. First, it emphasizes that throughout history God has worked through individuals and indicated that it is His desire to use Vladimir for his purposes. Second, it focuses on the conversion of the Gentiles, which is a mandate that includes the conversion of Rus'. Third, the account centers the conversion experience in the Incarnation, which Vladimir, in his questions addressed to the philosopher, appears to comprehend and be attracted to. Vladimir's heart and mind are prepared, but his conversion must be delayed pending the arrival of circumstances that favor the concurrence of divine purpose and human agency. The Rus' advisers recommend baptism, but the location and timing are left to the prince. It is finally the siege of Kherson that provides the necessary conditions for conversion. Vladimir moves against a Christian city, but when he promises to be baptized if he is given a victory, God complies and the city falls. Not yet baptized, Vladimir then sends what is essentially a threat to the Greek emperors asking for their sister Anna's hand in marriage. The Greeks accept the offer and Vladimir agrees to accept baptism, but when she arrives, he has still not carried out his side of the agreement. God, however, has caused Vladimir to lose his sight, like the Apostle Paul, and Anna tells him that he will be healed only with baptism. While being baptized, he regains his sight and on his departure for Kiev, turns Kherson back over to the Greeks. Throughout the Kherson account, both Vladimir and God act emphatically, and through his providence, God accepts Vladimir's actions and his desire for baptism and uses them to accomplish his will. Through the concurrence of human agency and divine purpose, Vladimir is now ready to return to Kiev with his Christian wife, priests, and the holy relics of St. Clement in order to accomplish the baptism of his people.[55] Although the seeds of conversion were planted in

[55] *PVL*, 116,9–116,12.

Vladimir by the Greek philosopher, and baptism was conferred by a Greek bishop, the location of the conversion within the siege of Kherson gives Vladimir's decision a degree of independence from Greek influence and emphasizes the spiritual encounter between the Rus' prince and God, which results in Vladimir's own conversion and in the baptism of his people.

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POLITICS AND HIERARCHY IN THE EARLY RUS' CHURCH: ANTONII, A 13TH-CENTURY ARCHBISHOP OF NOVGOROD

George P. Majeska

The Orthodox Church of Russia is a hierarchical institution. Administration is essentially in the hands of the bishops, who delegate powers to monasteries and parish clergy. The chief hierarch of early Rus' was the metropolitan, who resided in Kiev (later in Vladimir, and still later in Moscow), and answered to the patriarch of Constantinople and his Holy Synod. Unlike the members of the Orthodox parish clergy, who are married men, bishops are recruited from the unmarried, monastic clergy. Despite the important role the bishops played in church life in early Rus', we have little biographical data on any of them from the period before the Mongol conquest of Rus' in 1237–1240.[1] The details we have are either quite basic—often just dates of service listed in chronicles—or items of dubious value garnered from hagiography: items that are recorded not so much as historical facts but rather as pious incidents meant to generate faith and reverence for the subject.

In the case of Antonii, a 13th-century archbishop of Novgorod (d. 1232), however, we have numerous details, largely because

[1] On the administrative structure of the church in Kievan Rus', see Shchapov, *State and Church*.

Tapestry of Russian Christianity: Studies in History and Culture. Nickolas Lupinin, Donald Ostrowski and Jennifer B. Spock, eds. Columbus, Ohio: Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures and the Resource Center for Medieval Slavic Studies, The Ohio State University, 2016, 23–38.

of the important role he played in the political life of the city-state of Novgorod, which was well recorded in the local chronicles, but also because some of his own personal writings have survived. Chronicling his life may give us some useful insight into the kinds of men who were raised to the high office of bishop in Rus', particularly in the city of Novgorod.

In the 13th century, the northwestern Rus' city of Novgorod was clearly one of the most important cities in the Rus' state, and likely its wealthiest. Its ecclesiastical head, the archbishop, might actually have been the most powerful figure in the city. Princes and mayors (*posadniki*) came and went, but (at least in theory) the archbishop remained, a formidable focus of local patriotism. The Novgorodian prelate was unique in that he alone carried the title of archbishop in the Rus' church, and also because he was chosen by the local populace (or at least by its leaders) and dispatched to the metropolitan of Kiev, the head of the church in Rus', solely for confirmation and consecration. He was not simply appointed by the metropolitan or by the metropolitan in conjunction with the local prince. But, of course, there was no hereditary local prince in Novgorod, and most of the other offices in the city-state that deemed itself "Lord Novgorod the Great" were also elective.

Dobrynia Iadreikovich, better known as Archbishop Antonii (who presided over the Novgorodian Church from 1211 to 1219, and again from 1225 to 1228), is best known to the scholarly community because of his *Kniga Palomnik,* or *Pilgrim Book*, his fascinating description of Constantinople in the year 1200, coincidently, a bare four years before this largest city in Christendom was conquered by the Latin crusaders. His work is an important historical source, albeit less for historians of Rus' than for historians of the Byzantine Empire. It is one of the finest and most detailed descriptions of medieval Constantinople in any language, particularly important for its record of the city's monumental topography just before it was sacked and looted by the knights of the Fourth Crusade. It is also a veritable mine of details about popular religion and local traditions, for here Antonii describes such things as the beauty of a patriarchal liturgy celebrated in the Great Church of St. Sophia, the glory of the choirs, specifics of the ritual (and the miraculous appearance of a rose "white as cheese" growing out of the forehead of a saint in a wall painting), as well as the stories connected with various saints and images he venerated in the city.

He recounts the story of a father forcing the angel who has come for his son's soul to wait until the end of the service where the boy was an acolyte, and the tale of an artist who claimed that he had depicted Christ as if he were alive; God struck him down for his presumption.[2] Producing such a work presupposes a talented and sophisticated author whose biography bears study.

Antonii's basic biography can be charted from his *Pilgrim Book* and the local chronicles of Novgorod.[3] The *Pilgrim Book* yields what we might call "hard data" about the author only as related to his visit to the Byzantine capital and what he saw there and recorded. It does, however, yield a specific date, Sunday, 21 May 1200 A.D, the date on which he notes seeing a miracle in the Great Church of St. Sophia: a candelabrum in the shape of a cross that hung above the main altar miraculously rose during matins to the accompaniment of cries of, "Kyrie eleison!" ("Lord have mercy!"). It then descended again, with the lamps still burning.[4] Unfortunately, no other sources confirm this wonder or its date, but the data here specifies a specific date when he was in Constantinople. Antonii's *Pilgrim Book* is so full of material on the Byzantine capital that it is hard to imagine that the facts were collected during a short trip. The author mentions almost one hundred monasteries, churches, and shrines in and around Constantinople, and an even larger number of relics and miraculous icons that he venerated. It is the fullest travel account of the Byzantine capital from the Middle Ages.[5] The work, in fact reads like the travel memoir of someone who had lived in the city quite a while and knew its patterns such as what happened on different holidays. Interestingly enough, the chronicle entry registering the choice of Antonii as archbishop of Novgorod in 1210 notes, by way of introducing the previously unmentioned monk (apparently recently tonsured after having traveled to Constantinople as a layman), that he had "just returned" from "Tsargrad" (that is, Constantinople).[6] Thus, Antonii might have spent significant time there (since he was already

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[2] *Kniga Palomnik.* On the text see O. A. Belobrova, "O 'Knige Palomnik'" 225–235; Seemann, *Wallfahrtsliteratur,* 213–221; and Lenhoff, "*Kniga Palomnik.*"

[3] See *Kniga Palomnik,* "Introduction."

[4] *Kniga Palomnik*, 13–15.

[5] Majeska, "Russian Pilgrims," 93; and Majeska, "Anthony of Novgorod."

[6] "Togdazhe biashe prishel," *Novgorodskaia pervaia letopis'*, 250.

visiting in May of 1200), and possibly made some important contacts.[7] In any case, with his call to the archiepiscopal throne of his home city began one of the most checkered careers of a Novgorodian hierarch of the Middle Ages.[8]

The circumstances of Antonii's choice as archbishop were clearly irregular. He was appointed (but did not take office) in 1210[9] by the new Prince of Novgorod, Mstislav Mstislavich "the Bold" (Udaloi) (from the Smolensk line of princes), to replace Archbishop Mitrofan, who had been irregularly appointed by the Grand Prince Vsevolod "Big Nest" (Bol'shoe Gnezdo) of Suzdal'. Mitrofan's appointment had been part of a package deal with the appointment of Grand Prince Vsevolod's son, Sviatoslav, as prince of Novgorod in 1199.[10] When the young prince was ousted, so was his

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[7] It has been suggested that if Antonii remained in Constantinople until shortly before his election as archbishop in 1210, he could also be the author of two pieces of Novgorodian material treating the Latins' sack of Constantinople that read like eyewitness accounts. Aleshkovskii, *Povest' vremennykh let*, 79, suggests that Antonii either himself wrote the long chronicle entry on the taking of Constantinople, "The Tale of the Taking of Tsargrad by the Crusaders," or at least insisted on its insertion into the *First Novgorod Chronicle*, the editing of which he oversaw. It is included sub anno 6712 (1204); see *Novgorodskaia pervaia letopis'*, 46–49, 240–246. Loparev (*Kniga Palomnik,* "Introduction") suggests that Antonii wrote a second version of the *Pilgrim Book* to include anti-Latin references. This supposed "second edition," however, could just as easily be the result of simple scribal emendations to "update" the work after 1204; see the textual variants included in the Loparev edition of *Kniga Palomnik*.

[8] The basic data are available in *Novgorodskaia pervaia letopis'*, 51–72; cf. ibid. 281–282, 473–474. Cf. Khoroshev, *Tserkov' v sotsial'no-politicheskoi sisteme*, 40–48; Ianin, *Novgorodskie posadniki*, 127–142; and Senyk, *Church in Ukraine,* 127–128, 139–140. On the tangled chronology of this part of the *Novgorod First Chronicle* (different year calculations, etc.) see Ianin, "K khronologii," 89–95; and Berezhkov, *Khronologiia*, 247. See Khoroshev, *Tserkov' v sotsial'no-politicheskoi sisteme*, 40–47, on the politics of the Novgorod archbishopric in this period, and Beliaev, *Istoriia Velikogo Novgoroda*, 262–309, on the political history.

[9] He actually took office only in 1211.

[10] Tolochko, "Kiev iNovgorod," 174–176. The case for Mitrofan's appointment as the work of the prince of Suzdal' is spelled out in Beliaev, *Istoriia Velikogo Novgoroda*, 262. It is difficult to see how Fennell, *Crisis*, 55, can describe Mitrofan as Prince Mstislav's "firm supporter." He seems to misinterpret the *Novgorod First Chronicle* entry for 1210 on relations between the prince and the bishop, albeit Mitrofan actually fled to Toropets, the previous throne of Mstislav, when he was ousted—perhaps to appeal to the prince to reconsider. But Fennell also puts far too much weight on an

ecclesiastical counterpart, Mitrofan, to be replaced by an anti-Suzdal' cleric who would mirror the period's dominant orientation, namely, Antonii. The deposed archbishop, Mitrofan, bided his time, first in the town of Toropets, and then with his patron in the Suzdal' lands, until 1219, when he returned to Novgorod. While Antonii was away, Mitrofan managed to take over the cathedral with the backing of the pro-Suzdal' faction of the populace. His supporters were in control and they told Antonii, "Go wherever you want!" (*Poidi gde ti liubo*). He returned to Novgorod (evidently "where he wanted") and stayed at the Spas Nereditsa Monastery, conveniently close to the princely residence (*gorodishche*), held, apparently, by the backers of Mstislav's son Vsevolod, the current prince. (Prince Mstislav the Bold himself had gone off to take the principality of Galich in the south.) The situation was clearly uncanonical: Lord Novgorod the Great was faced with two archbishops for the one Cathedral of St. Sophia, with both, as it were, now in residence in the city. Probably because they were secure in the knowledge that their candidate had seniority on the Novgorodian episcopal throne, the pro-Suzdal' party pressed to send both would-be incumbents to the court of the metropolitanate in Kiev for resolution of their dispute. Their assumption proved correct, and their candidate, Mitrofan, was returned to office in the city. Rather than being punished for usurping an already occupied throne and being sent for penance to a monastery, however, the metropolitan appointed Antonii to rule the newly established (or reestablished) bishopric of Peremysl'.[11]

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incident when Mitrofan prevented the desecration of the body of an anti-Suzdal' former *posadnik*, Dmitrii Miroshkinich (ibid., 61, n67, n68). It must be remembered that Mitrofan was appointed out of Suzdal' when his predecessor on the archbishop's throne died while on an embassy there; Suzdalian envoys actually accompanied Mitrofan to Kiev for his installation! Moreover, in 1222, it was Mitrofan who led the Novgorodian delegation to Suzdal' to ask for a prince of the Suzdal' line to replace Vsevolod Mstislavich. He then served as regent for the underage Suzdalian prince Vsevolod Iur'evich (*Novgorodskaia pervaia letopis'*, 60).

[11] *Novgorodskaia pervaia letopis'*, 51–72; Isaiv, *Istoriia Permis'koho iepiskopstva,* 8–9; I am grateful to Prof. Ihor Ševčenko for this second citation. On the bizarre history of this area in the 13th century, when it went back and forth among Rus', Poland, and Hungary, see *Galician-Volynian Chronicle*, 24–33, 132–134; Sharanevych, *Istoriia Halytsko-Volodimyrskoy Rusy,* 75–80; Fennell, *Crisis,* 34–44; and Winter, *Russland und das Papsttum*, 82–87. Peremysl' traditionally went to a younger son of the Galician prince: see Hrushevskyj, *Istoriia Ukrainy-Rusy*, 2:462. There is considerable

The lack of punishment for usurpation of the already occupied Novgorod episcopal throne should not be surprising; the metropolitan had originally authorized the appointment and consecrated Antonii for that post. The metropolitan's decision to appoint the newly unemployed Antonii to Peremysl', however, suggests something very special. This principality had just been wrested from Hungarian occupation, during which time the churches there had been handed over to the Latins by the Hungarian king. Peremysl' was also in the sphere, if not the gift, of Antonii's patron, Prince Mstislav Mstislavich, now on the throne of Galich.[12]

At the death of Archbishop Mitrofan in 1222, the people of Novgorod, still under the influence of the Suzdal' party, chose the monk Arsenii of the same Khutyn Monastery that had produced Antonii as their new *vladyka* (Lord Bishop). Since Arsenii apparently had been warned that the metropolitan would not consecrate him, he never went to Kiev. Meanwhile, the Suzdal' party in Novgorod that had supported him lost power under a series of child princes dispatched from Suzdal'. As the Suzdal' army marched on Novgorod to reassert Suzdalian claims there, the Novgorodian burghers worked out a compromise with Suzdal'. They agreed to pay off the Suzdal' grand prince and accept as their service prince Mikhail Vsevolodovich of Chernigov, Grand Prince Iurii of Suzdal''s brother-in-law.

In 1225, after the Hungarians retook Peremysl', and during Prince Mikhail's very short first reign in Novgorod, Antonii returned to his original see and resumed his archiepiscopal throne, perhaps as part of the negotiated compromise.[13] When Prince Mikhail left for Chernigov, however, the more clearly pro-Suzdal' faction again became active, particularly once the office of Novgorodian prince had gone to Iaroslav Vsevolodovich of Pereiaslavl', Iurii of Suzdal''s brother. As the new prince gained control in Novgorod,

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dispute over the early years of the Peremysl' eparchy: see Senyk, *Church in Ukraine*, 139–142.

[12] *PSRL* 25 (1949), 110; Pashuto, *Ocherki*, 149; and Aleshkovskii, *Povest' vremennykh let*, 79. On the political events in this area in the first half of the 13th century, see Pashuto, *Ocherki*, 191–220; and Pashuto, *Vneshniaia politika*, 241–251.

[13] On Mikhail of Chernigov's rule in Novgorod, see Dimnik, *Mikhail, Prince of Chernigov*, 15–51. Dimnik would seem to be incorrect, however, in seeing Antonii as an active supporter of the Suzdal' line of princes (ibid., 31n52). The material he cites in support of his position can just as easily be read as depicting a pastoral figure trying to minister to various factions in his flock. See also above, note 8.

Antonii felt less and less welcome and finally returned to his Khutyn Monastery (1228), to be replaced in the Archbishop's Palace by the same Arsenii he had ousted from office previously. Once Prince Iaroslav went off and left Novgorod in the charge of his two young sons, however, the populace turned on the still unconsecrated *Vladyka* Arsenii, blaming him for the rains continuing into December, a weather pattern that had made it impossible to harvest the grain. He was also accused of gaining his office by bribing the prince. In a general anti-Suzdal' *mêlée* he was beaten almost to death by a crowd before he escaped to the cathedral, where he claimed sanctuary. Probably at the request of Antonii, who had resumed his archiepiscopal office, Arsenii was allowed to retire again to the Khutyn Monastery.[14] Now bereft of speech, Antonii functioned through two spokesmen appointed by the city until, still in 1228, he accepted the counsel of the newly reinstalled Prince Mikhail Vsevolodovich of Chernigov (Iurii's brother-in-law, and the earlier "compromise candidate") and voluntarily retired, also to the Khutyn Monastery.

After Antonii's retirement, a different ritual was followed for appointing a successor: what appears to have been a committee put the names of three candidates into a chalice from which an old monk was asked to draw one. With the agreement of all factions (it seems), the monk Spiridon was named archbishop of Novgorod and dispatched to Kiev to be consecrated to bishop's orders.[15] Antonii died at the Khutyn Monastery in 1232 and was buried in the narthex (*pritvor*) of St. Sophia in the presence of his successor, Archbishop Spiridon, apparently in the good graces of the local church leadership.[16] So ended a strange and unseemly episode in the evolving relations between Novgorod and the grand princely seat of Suzdal' (soon to be moved to Moscow).[17]

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[14] On possible interpretations of this strange incident, see Froianov, "O sobytiiakh 1227–1230," 97–113.

[15] Khoroshev, *Tserkov' v sotsial'no-politicheskoi sisteme*, 43–47; Beliaev, *Istoriia Velikogo Novgoroda,* 308–309. On the tradition of Novgorod choosing its own archbishop, see Tomilin, *Velikonovgorodskaia kafedra*, 7–12; and cf. also Ianin, "K khronologii," 95.

[16] *Novgorodskaia pervaia letopis',* 72; and Ianin, "K khronologii," 89–94. On the burial place of Archbishop Antonii, the Martirii porch (*papert'*) on the church's south side, near the Chapel of the Nativity of the Mother of God, see Ianin, *Nekropol'*, 81–87.

[17] On the general political situation in Novgorod, see Beliaev, *Istoriia Velikogo Novgoroda,* 262–309; and Dimnik, *Mikhail, Prince of Chernigov*, 15–51.

Explaining the strange career of Dobrynia Iadreikovich is not easy. Apparently, he was from an important Novgorod family, doubtless merchant-boyar stock. D. I. Prozorovskii argues rather convincingly, albeit on the basis of circumstantial evidence, that Dobrynia was from the family of Proksha Malynich, a clan that produced a number of officials of Novgorod, including Antonii's father, the *voevoda* (governor-general) Iadrei Prokshinich,[18] who was killed by the Iugrians in 1218. This might well be true. What is beyond dispute is that Antonii had a good education, for he writes literately and with style. His syntax is excellent; his ability to wield words and archaicisms comfortably and effectively is impressive. He never misses a chance to use the dual, and uses it correctly, even in oblique cases. Gail Lenhoff has argued, quite correctly, that his *Pilgrim Book* is an elegant and sophisticated adaptation of the *khozhdenie* genre popularized by Igumen Daniil in the previous century.[19] As a literary work, Antonii's *Pilgrim Book* demonstrates an enviable control of rhetorical devices, levels of diction, and use of salient detail and emotion. And it was probably a Novgorodian secular education that allowed Antonii to pen this work; the language in his *Pilgrim Book* is relatively free of Church Slavonicisms, strengthening the argument that he was not yet in holy orders when he made his trip.

Antonii's trip to Constantinople must have taken considerable money, probably his own, for there is no real evidence that he went to Byzantium as part of an official delegation from either church or state, although that possibility is not *prima facie* excluded.[20] That he was an important citizen of Novgorod is suggested

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[18] Iadrei (sometimes called Iakov, perhaps his baptismal name) Prokshinich. The original patriarch of the family, Proksha, was shorn by St. Varlaam of Khutyn, and died a monk of that monastery. Proksha's second son, Viacheslav, also eventually took vows at the Savior Khutyn Monastery, and became the monk Varlaam, often confused with the founder of the monastery who carried the same monastic name. This later Varlaam was Dobrynia's uncle; when he died, he was buried in the Khutyn Monastery with great ceremony by Archbishop Spiridon, Dobrynia/Antonii's successor on the archiepiscopal throne of Novgorod. See the full argument in Prozorovskii, "O rodoslovii sv. Antoniia," 1–15. See also Khoroshev, *Tserkov' v sotsial'no-politicheskoi sisteme*, 166–167; and Aleshkovskii, *Povest' vremennykh let*, 79.

[19] Lenhoff, "*Kniga Palomnik*," 39–61.

[20] He might well have come to Constantinople as a private citizen representing the anti-Suzdal' party in Novgorod.

by the "souvenirs" he brought back with him from Constantinople: a piece of the wood of the "true cross"; a "tomb of the Lord" (a ribbon measuring the size of the tomb of Christ in Jerusalem, or, in this case, more likely, of a Constantinopolitan facsimile); a piece of the martyr robe of St. Theodore; relics of St. Blaise; and a piece of the stone from under the head of St. John the Evangelist in the tomb—hardly mementos of a common pilgrim.[21] Moreover, the Khutyn Monastery, founded by the Novgorod boyar Aleksei Mikhailovich (later St. Varlaam of Khutyn), where Dobrynia took his vows, was the wealthiest monastery in the Novgorod lands and attracted the boyar elite of the city.[22] From what other sources indicate, Dobrynia Iadreikovich would have fit in well.

Explaining Dobrynia's almost unprecedented overnight rise from merchant-boyar layman to the second highest position in the Rus' church hierarchy is difficult. Certainly being an educated man (and perhaps even a very spiritual man) would have been important, but he also had excellent political credentials. His family was part of the anti-Suzdal' party that won out in 1210 with the appointment of Mstislav the Bold as service prince of Novgorod to replace the Suzdalian holder of that throne. Dobrynia, now Archbishop Antonii, was, in fact, the anti-Suzdal' ecclesiastical counterpart of the new prince. Moreover, it is possible that, having just recently spent time in Constantinople as a wealthy traveler, he might have personally forged ties with members of the Holy Synod whose members would thus have known him personally and perhaps have decided to use him in an anti-Suzdal' ecclesiastical campaign.

The top church hierarchy in Constantinople, like the metropolitan in Kiev, must have been exasperated by Suzdalian behavior. From the time of Prince Andrei Bogoliubskii's reign in Suzdal' (1157–74), the local princes had been initiating moves to gain ecclesiastical independence from the Kiev metropolitanate, and, more recently (1185), the Suzdalian Prince Vsevolod "Big-Nest" had even rejected the Kiev metropolitan's appointee to the Rostov bishopric in favor of his own candidate.[23] That action must have

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[21] *Kniga Palomnik*, 11, 22, 33; *Novgorodskaia pervaia letopis'*, 52. On these relics see Tsarevskaia, "O tsar'gradskikh relikviiakh."

[22] Khoroshev, *Politicheskaia istoriia kanonizatsii*, 70–71; and Khoroshev, *Tserkov' v sotsial'no-politicheskoi sisteme*, 166, 203–211.

[23] Kartashev, *Ocherki*, 1: 188, 222.

angered both the metropolitan in Kiev and the patriarch. In Novgorod, Mitrofan had been appointed archbishop under pressure from the Suzdalian prince; Antonii, according to this scenario, would have replaced the pro-Suzdal' bishop as a loyal son of the Kiev metropolitan and the Patriarchal Synod in Constantinople, and the ecclesiastical authorities would not have demurred about raising an only recently professed monk to the rank of archbishop overnight.

One of the periods of Antonii's life about which it would be interesting to know more is his activity as bishop in Peremysl', where he was obviously appointed to retrieve the area for the Kiev Metropolitanate and the Orthodox Church. Were there reasons that he was the appropriate person for the job besides his being an unemployed bishop and a favorite of the powerful regional prince? Were his ties with the Patriarchal Synod in Constantinople key? Did his educational level or experience with western Christian merchants in Novgorod put him in particularly good stead? No sources seem to address these questions.

Antonii must have commanded considerable respect among the clergy and people of Novgorod, for long after his death he was closely connected in popular lore with St. Varlaam (d. 1192/1193), the beloved founder of the Khutyn Monastery. Varlaam was said to have given over to Antonii the direction of that community at his death,[24] a circumstance that would have been chronologically impossible. In fact, there was likely a popular confusion here with the later St. Varlaam, also an abbot of Khutyn (d. 1243), and a contemporary of Antonii (possibly his uncle), whose career uncannily parallels Antonii's.[25] Varlaam (Viacheslav Prokshinich in the world) was part of the embassy that negotiated a compromise with Grand Prince Iurii of Suzdal' when the latter was leading his army toward Novgorod in 1224.[26] As a result of these negotiations, Mikhail Vsevolodovich of Chernigov took the Novgorodian princely throne and Antonii was returned to the episcopal throne of the city in 1225. Elected *tysiatskii* (militia general of the city) three years later, Viacheslav abruptly resigned and retired to the

[24] See, for example, the "Sofiia II Chronicle," *PSRL* 6 (1853), 135 (s.a. 1407).

[25] Dmitriev, *Zhitiinye povesti*, 14–19, 33–73; cf. Ianin, *Novgorodskie akty,* 207–210. On the texts possibly responsible for this confusion, see Anisimov, "Ikona Varlaama," 138–167.

[26] *Novgorodskaia pervaia letopis',* 64.

Khutyn Monastery, where Antonii retired the same year—and possibly for the same political reason: the temporary demise of the anti-Suzdal' clique.

Popular and elite lore both remembered Antonii—correctly, it would seem—as a representative of the anti-Suzdalian party. His informal canonization in the 15th century, in the midst of the Novgorodian struggle against Muscovite absorption, for example, apparently resulted from a dream of the sexton (*ponomarkh*) at the Cathedral to St. Sophia in which a group of Novgorod archbishops buried in the cathedral nartheces appeared. All the bishops in this vision besides Antonii (and, therefore, probably including him as well) were known defenders of Novgorod's traditional independence against the imperialist menace of Suzdal'. They represented the sanctity of the Novgorodian church's struggle against the encroachments of the new Suzdalian threat, Moscow. Interestingly, Antonii's real-life competitors for the archiepiscopal see (most notably, Mitrofan, who was buried in the same area, but also the unconsecrated Arsenii), pro-Suzdal' all, were not part of the sexton's patriotically inspired vision.[27]

It is obvious that Dobrynia Iadreikovich was intimately involved in the politics of 13th-century Rus', as was, of course, any archbishop of Novgorod. Although he was clearly of the group that supported the independence of the Novgorodian republic, and probably from an important family from the "trading side" of Novgorod, the area that usually led the anti-Suzdal', pro-independence faction in the city,[28] he does not appear to have been a fanatic. His tenure, after all, coincided with princes and mayors (*posadniki*) of both persuasions with whom he seemed to work. Indeed, some scholars even treat Antonii as a backer of Suzdalian centralization policies in Novgorod because of some of his actions that might better be seen as examples of evenhandedness on the part of the spiritual leader of that fractious state.[29]

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[27] *PSRL* 3 (1870), 239, 271; Khoroshev, *Politicheskaia istorii kanonizatsii*, 137–145; and Khoroshev, *Tserkov' v sotsial'no-politicheskoi sisteme*, 40–50, 92–96.

[28] Aleshkovskii, *Povest' vremennykh let*, 79, suggests that Antonii's family was connected with the Miroshkinichi clan of the Nerevskii ward on the trading side, against whom the Suzdalian faction had rioted in 1207.

[29] See above, p. 32

But one must also see the career of Antonii within the larger context of the politics of the Russian Church. His original (essentially uncanonical) appointment to Novgorod was sealed by his consecration to episcopal orders by Metropolitan Matthew, just lately arrived in Kiev from Byzantium and clearly beholden to the Ol'govich line of princes from Smolensk who ruled in Kiev through Vsevolod "the Red" (Chermnyi). The Ol'govichi were vying for leadership of the Rus' federation with the Suzdal' princes presided over by Vsevolod Big-Nest. Mitrofan, who was ousted from the archiepiscopal throne of Novgorod by another Ol'govich prince, Mstislav the Bold, had been consecrated by Matthew's predecessor on the metropolitan throne, Nicephorus II, who had become a supporter of Suzdal'.[30] When Mitrofan returned to Novgorod with the backing of the Suzdal'-line prince resident in his city, Matthew had to accept his reinstatement as a matter of common sense. What to do with the deposed Antonii was certainly a problem, however. He had been, after all, not only the second-ranking hierarch in the Russian church by dint of presiding over Novgorod, but he was also a client of the Ol'govich princes dominant in Kiev. However, creating a see for Antonii within the Galich principality now ruled by Antonii's former patron, Prince Mstislav the Bold (formerly of Novgorod), might not have been simply making a place for the throneless Bishop Antonii. The metropolitan's decision to appoint the newly unemployed Antonii to Peremysl' suggests something more.

The erection (or resurrection) of the Peremysl' Orthodox diocese, and Antonii's appointment to it, should be seen as part of a larger Byzantine-Church response to aggressive behavior on the part of the Latin Church in the early 13th century. That behavior included not only the closure of eastern churches in Hungarian territory, but also the establishment of a Latin patriarchate in crusader-run Constantinople, and increasingly threatening actions against Eastern Christian Rus' principalities like Novgorod and Pskov on the part of the German knightly crusader orders settled on the Baltic coast. Retrieving Peremysl' spiritually would have been another part of that campaign to shore up Eastern Christianity under siege. Antonii would be an appropriate choice for the position of bishop of Peremysl' not only because he was an educated man, but also because he had experience in Constantinople, where, as an important Rus' visitor, he might well have had dealings with the senior

[30] Cf. Poppe, "Mitropolity kievskie," 200–202.

hierarchy of the Byzantine capital. After all, he brought home a number of important relics that he could not have obtained without considerable support in high places in the Constantinople ecclesiastical establishment.

Had Antonii, perhaps, obtained his throne in Novgorod in part, at least, as someone with the explicit trust of the patriarch and Holy Synod because of having met with synod members during his visit to the Byzantine capital? Was there, for some reason, an anti-Suzdal' policy at the Byzantine patriarchal court now driven into exile in Nicaea by the Latin occupation of Constantinople? Antonii, then, could be seen as promoted to the episcopate specifically in order to play the role of a well-connected "trouble-shooter" for the Patriarchate of Constantinople both in Novgorod and in Peremysl'.

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ANOTHER LOOK AT THE SOLID ICONOSTASIS IN THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Robert M. Arida

I. Introduction

It would not be an exaggeration to say that to date there are no conclusive studies on the development of the iconostasis in Russia. This study, while not claiming to solve the problem, does seek to offer questions, comments, and some analysis on historical and theological data that might help further the discussion surrounding one of the most prominent features of Russian Orthodox liturgical art and architecture.

For the student of Russian history and culture, the appearance of the developed iconostasis in Russia marks an important development in church art and architecture. Though this study does not compare the development of the relatively low Byzantine iconostasis with its Slavic counterpart,[1] the first set of questions to be raised is why did such a prominent, and at times overwhelming, structure develop in Russia? Is it a cultural phenomenon brought about by the abundance of wood located in and around Moscow, Novgorod, and Vladimir?[2] Did the high wooden icono-

[1] On the development of the Byzantine iconostasis see *Thresholds of the Sacred*.

[2] See Lazarev, *Russian Icon*.

Tapestry of Russian Christianity: Studies in History and Culture. Nickolas Lupinin, Donald Ostrowski and Jennifer B. Spock, eds. Columbus, Ohio: Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures and the Resource Center for Medieval Slavic Studies, The Ohio State University, 2016, 41–69.

stasis compensate for the lack of plastered and masonry walls in Russian churches?[3] Was it a "spontaneous" phenomenon?[4] Can the solid iconostasis be traced to Athonite influences, including the *Diataxis* of Patriarch Philotheos of Constantinople?[5] Or was the solid and multi-tiered iconostasis developed from a combination of cultural and theological factors that led to an understanding of liturgical worship that parted from its Byzantine forerunner?

For the historian, the development of the Russian iconostasis could point to the shift of political and religious responsibility from Constantinople to Moscow. As the iconostasis began its vertical ascent in 15th-century Russia, Byzantium was in the last phases of political decline. With the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Byzantium's missionary responsibility to convert the world ended. Was the appearance of the multi-tiered Russian iconostasis a political/religious statement, in which the community of saints, who are gathered around the enthroned Savior, reflected the "first fruits of [Christ's] universal reign" and which were now to be augmented by the grand princes and tsars of Moscow?[6] While these questions have been raised, the answers have not been altogether convincing.

Attention has already been drawn to hesychasm and its association with the development of the Russian iconostasis.[7] This study seeks to examine hesychasm from the perspective of an inner tension that created a polarity between unceasing prayer and the reception of the sacraments. On the surface, hesychasm, as it spread from Byzantium to the Balkans and finally into Russia, has often been perceived as a monolithic movement. Yet, like all spiritual movements, it was not without its variations.[8] Questions raised in this study will focus on the conflict within the hesychast

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[3] Consideration is given to this idea by Majeska, "Ikonostas."

[4] Ouspensky, "Problem," 186.

[5] The *Diataxis* is a rubrical book for celebrating the Divine Liturgy. Lidov ("Iconostasis," 717) proposes that the *Diataxis* of Philotheos was a channel by which hesychasm influenced the structure of the iconostasis to the extent that it became a "wall of icons concealing the sacrament and at the same time giving it a new mystical image." There is no mention of the solid iconostasis in the *Diataxis*. See *Hai treis leitourgiai*.

[6] Labrecque-Pervouchine, *L'Iconostase*, 52.

[7] See Cheremeteff, "Transformation," 107–140.

[8] See for example Bushkovitch, "Hesychasm" for a discussion of the 14th- and 15th-century transmission and manifestation of hesychasm in Russia.

movement that may have played a role in the emergence of the solid and vertically developed iconostasis.

The dearth of both archeological and written sources renders particularly challenging the tracing of the historical development of the iconostasis for there are no contemporary treatises of Byzantine or Russian vintage on the subject. Archeological evidence has been helpful, but it has not eliminated conjectures regarding the height and transparency of early partitions separating the altar area and nave. Consequently, discussion of this topic can lead to waves of frustration. Yet, unless scholars continue to ask questions and display a willingness to search for and to interpret new sources or to re-examine familiar sources previously seen as unrelated to Russian religious art and architecture, the development of the iconostasis will remain an enigma, leaving both the historian and the liturgical theologian with a severe handicap for interpreting one of the most imposing features to shape Orthodox worship and, dare I say, local Orthodox culture and life.

II. Architecture and Worship

A brief review of Christian architecture and worship will provide the historical context for the emergence of the Russian iconostasis.

The Christian edifice emerged out of Jewish and pagan antecedents. The synagogues, particularly those influenced by Greek art and the pagan basilica, contributed to the creation and organization of space needed to properly accommodate the development of Christian worship.[9] In addition to Jewish and pagan influences, the house church and catacombs also contributed to the formation and use of liturgical space.[10]

Prior to the Constantinian era, architecture and liturgy had been joined in an indissoluble bond. From the earliest times, space, movement (including processions), the chanting and exposition of scripture, hymnody, liturgical symbols, and iconography had created a liturgical symphony or liturgical synthesis[11]

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[9] See Milburn, *Early Christian Art*, 9–56.

[10] Dix, *Shape of the Liturgy*, 16ff.

[11] The concept of liturgy as the synthesis of art was used by Florensky, "La liturgie comme synthèse des arts," 54–62. Russian text in Florenskii, *Sobranie sochineniia*, 1: 41–56. Though Florensky wrote his article in 1918, his insights into the relationship of worship and art should not be perceived as a modern contrivance or imposition on the thought of the

necessary to convey the message of the Gospel culminating with the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

The earliest organization of Christian liturgical space can be traced back to Roman house churches of the pagan empire. Extant archeological evidence shows that house churches were arranged to accommodate the rites and functions of the local Christian community.[12] Delineated spaces for baptisms, catechetical instruction, and the celebration of the Lord's Supper were the precursors to the division of space in what became the established Christian building made up of narthex, nave, and sanctuary.[13]

The practical and therefore intentional division of liturgical space leading to the separation of the nave and the sanctuary played a significant role in the understanding of liturgy and architecture. If one carefully approaches the relationship between worship and space and if *lex orandi est lex credendi* ("the rule of prayer is the rule of belief"), then architecture, including the chancel partition and its subsequent development into the solid iconostasis, expresses a theology or theologies either consistent with, or divergent from, an orthodox understanding of prayer and sacramental life. This is not to imply that culture and politics had no influence in the process leading to the appearance of the solid iconostasis. Culture and politics, however, are components of a complex process that does not preclude the need to discern the role theology holds in the development of the iconostasis.[14] Though the need to include theology in the discussion may seem obvious, it is often overlooked. Archeology, culture, and politics joined to historical commentary are linked to movements and symptoms that may be the results of theological and spiritual dispositions.

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past. This particular work of Florensky's should be read as an attempt to articulate the inherent dynamic between art and worship.

[12] See Pace, "Nuova ipotesi," 198–201.

[13] These three areas are the remnants of the Christian building today. It should be stressed that by the sixth century, the urban church complex consisted of more than one building, including the church proper, with attached sacristies and separate structures for baptisms. This complex of buildings also applies to the urban monasteries, which, in addition to being centers of prayer and study, were also centers for caring for the poor and infirm. See Ruggieri, *Byzantine Religious Architecture*, esp. 135–186.

[14] See for example Constas, "Symeon of Thessalonike," 163–183.

III. History, Eschatology, and Maximus the Confessor

Though this study does not intend to provide a detailed analysis of the historical and eschatological dimensions of Byzantine worship, the interplay of time and eternity as revealed in the organization of liturgical space informs the discussion of the Russian iconostasis. One of the earliest texts of the New Testament that shows the interrelationship of history and eschatology in a liturgical context comes from St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians (written ca. 55). This letter, which contains some of the earliest references to a local celebration of the Lord's Supper, ends with the liturgical exclamation *Marana Tha* ("Come Lord," 16:22). Linguistic analysis of this Aramaic phrase shows that within the context of the Lord's Supper, there is the strong sense that Christ's coming again is an event to be anticipated and a present reality. This concept of inaugurated eschatology is also expressed in the Gospel of St. Luke, where the disciples know the resurrected Lord in the (liturgical) breaking of bread (24:35). The Apocalypse of St. John (22:20) also preserves the grammatical imperative of *Marana Tha* in Greek form (*Erchou Kyrie Iesou!*).[15]

The vision of history and eschatology in Christian worship provides a useful lens through which to examine the development of the iconostasis in Russia. The Lord, who is to come again and is already present in the breaking of the Eucharistic bread, is a fundamental feature of Christian worship and preaching. In the context of worship all things are being made new (see Rev. 21:1ff.). Given this liturgical and biblical affirmation, the question as to whether the iconostasis in Russia might have obscured the relationship between history and eschatology arises. In other words, does the iconostasis as a solid partition enhance the understanding and experience of the interpenetration of time and eternity or does it convey another liturgical vision that divides and even polarizes matter and spirit, man and God, mind and body, earth and heaven, male and female, prayer and sacraments?

Saint Maximus the Confessor (580–662) in his *Mystagogia* (*Mystagogy*),[16] offers one of the most stimulating theological

[15] Related and diverging opinions on *Marana Tha* can be gleaned from Conzelmann, *I Corinthians: A Commentary*, 300–301. See also Caird, *Revelation of St. John*, 288.

[16] Maximus the Confessor, *Mystagogy*. The *Mystagogy* can be found in vol. 91 of J. P. Migne's Patrologiae cursus completus. Series graeca, Refe-

expositions of Christian worship and liturgical space. More than the other well-known liturgical commentators coming from Byzantium,[17] Maximus stresses to his audience the inseparable relationship of history and eschatology and its articulation in liturgical space.

At this point the historian may rightly question the use of the *Mystagogy* of Maximus in a study of the Russian iconostasis, since there appears to be no evidence that the *Mystagogia* was known in 15th-century Russia. Two responses can be given to the astute historian. The first has already been made—that is, Maximus wrote about liturgical space in relationship to history and eschatology. Secondly, if we can trust the *spirit* of the account of Russia's conversion to Orthodox Christianity as described in the *Primary Chronicle*, it appears that more than any other conduit, Byzantine worship influenced the culture that would ensue from Vladimir's conversion.[18] Maximus is important because he articulates for the contemporary reader a vision of liturgical worship —a vision of the historical and eschatological—that was simply and eloquently expressed by those perceptive emissaries who most likely stood in the nave of the Great Church of Hagia Sophia during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy: "We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth."[19]

For Maximus, liturgical space and choreography, or liturgical movement, show how time and eternity interpenetrate. Here the importance of open and delineated space cannot be overlooked, since it is the organization of space that enables liturgical movement to express the ascent of the material world into the world to come.[20] Space and its accompanying liturgy *represent*

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rences to the *Mystagogy* in this article refer the reader to Berthold's translation in the *Selected Writings* (see Maximus the Confessor, *Mystagogy* in the "Works Cited" at the end of this article).

[17] In contrast, see also St. Dionysius the Areopagite (fifth c.,"Pseudo-Dionysius"), "Ecclesiastical Hierarchies"; St. Germanus of Constantinople (eighth c.), "Ecclesiastical History and Mystical Contemplation," in his *On the Divine Liturgy*; St. Nicholas Cabasillas (14th c.), *On the Divine Liturgy*; and St. Symeon of Thessalonika (15th c.), "On the Sacred Liturgy" and "Explanation of the Divine Temple."

[18] See *Russian Primary Chronicle*, 110–111.

[19] *Russian Primary Chronicle*, 111.

[20] "Thus the holy Church [building]...is the figure and image of God inasmuch as through it he effects in his infinite power and wisdom an unconfused unity from the various essences of beings, attaching them to him-

the dimensions of history and eschatology, which, while being distinct, are one and inseparable.

The *Mystagogia* describes the church building as an expression of diversity in unity and unity in diversity. As a Constantinopolitan, Maximus knew Justinian's Great Church and the older churches that utilized space to reveal rather than conceal the age to come. One can sense Maximus' turning to the Council of Chalcedon and its defense of the divine and human natures of Christ being united in one person yet "without confusion, without change, without division and without separation." This basic definition of Chalcedon, together with the council's incorporation of the Tome of Pope Leo, which maintained the uniqueness and interpenetration (*perichoresis*) of each nature, is an important key to understanding the *Mystagogia*.[21] It allowed St. Maximus to speak about the uniqueness of altar and nave as well as their mutual interpenetration or exchange of properties. Unity and diversity co-exist in the context of the renewed and transfigured cosmos. Maximus stresses this reality by stating that the church,

> while ... one house in its construction ... admits of a certain diversity in the disposition of its plan by being divided into an area exclusively assigned to priests and ministers, which we call a sanctuary, and one accessible to all the faithful, which we call a nave. Still, it is one in its basic reality without being divided into its parts by reason of the differences between them, but rather by[22] their relationship to the unity it frees these parts from the difference arising from their names. It shows to each other in turn what each one is for itself. Thus, the nave is the sanctuary in potency by being consecrated by the relationship of the sacrament [i.e. *mystagogia*] toward its end, and in turn the sanctuary is the nave in act by possessing the principle of its own sacrament, which remains one and the same in its two parts.[23]

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self as a creator at their highest point, and this operates according to the grace of faith for the faithful, joining them all to each other in one form according to a single grace and calling of faith, the active virtuous ones in a single identity of will the contemplative and Gnostic ones in an unbroken and undivided concord as well. It is a figure of both the spiritual and sensible world, with the sanctuary as symbol of the intelligible world and the nave as symbol of the world of sense." Maximus the Confessor, *Mystagogy*, Chapter 24, 208.

[21] See Grdzelidze, "Liturgical Space," 499–504.

[22] See Maximus Confessor, *Mystagogy*, 217n33.

[23] Maximus Confessor, *Mystagogy*, Chapter 2.

Quoting the anonymous elder to whom he is writing, Maximus refers to the church building as both imprint (*typos*) and image (*eikon*) of God.[24] Thus, entering the church (Chapter 9), the reading of the Gospel, the kiss of peace, and the dismissal of the catechumens with the closing of the doors separating the nave from the narthex (Chapters 13–15) are all joined to what Maximus elsewhere refers to as the "new mystery" (*To kainon mysterion*), which is the celebration of the Eucharist.[25] The celebration of the Eucharist actualizes the economy of salvation in time and space. For Maximus, this historical actualization fulfilled in the "new mystery" constitutes the re-ordering and deification of the cosmos.

The transfiguration and therefore the sacredness of all creation culminate in the distribution and reception of the Eucharist. In the context of this mystery, the communicant becomes one with the divine without mixture or confusion. By extension, the unity between God and humanity includes history and eschatology:

> The confession, which is made by all the people at the end of the sacred celebration (*mystike hierougia*) "One is holy," and what follows, manifest the reassembling and union, which, being beyond reason and intelligence, will come about in the mysterious unity of the divine simplicity of those who were led by God to perfection by a mysterious wisdom...[After this confession] comes the communion of the mystery (i.e. the Eucharist) which transforms by grace and participation those who will be judged worthy of taking part to appear similar to the original.... The participants become God by grace. Nothing will remain empty of his presence.[26]

IV. The Templon

The significance of the *Mystagogia* lies in its attempt to describe the relationship of architecture and liturgy in light of history and eschatology. It is this relationship that facilitates the contemplative and physical ascent of the faithful into the mystery of the Lord's Supper, which, from earliest times, was an historical and eschatological event. An integral feature of liturgical architecture aiding

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[24] Maximus Confessor, *Mystagogy*, Chapter 1. See also Dalmais, "Mystère liturgique," 59–60.

[25] Dalmais, "Mystère liturgique," 56 is quoting from *Quaestiones ad Thalassium,* Patralogiae cursus completus. Series graeca, ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 90, cols. 665B and 713B.

[26] Chapter 21 of the *Mystagogy* as quoted by Dalmais, "Place de la *Mystagogie*," 287 [translation by RA].

this ascent was the templon. This structure, separating as well as joining sanctuary and nave, generated a liturgical dynamism that drew the attention of both clergy and laity to the altar table.

The templon existed before the appearance of the solid iconostasis and before the long, complex reorganization of liturgical space. Along with the ambon, then a prominent separate raised platform in the center of the nave connected by a raised walkway to the sanctuary, the templon helped to maintain the dynamism between history and eschatology. Thus, from the ambon, the word of God announced the Incarnation as both fulfillment and a turning point in history. Receiving this "good news" was a *sine qua non* for the liturgical participation in the banquet of the world to come.

The templon, with interspersed columns capped with an architrave, is both frame and base for what became the solid iconostasis. It served as the frame for the lower Byzantine-type iconostasis, where icons eventually filled the open spaces between columns, including the side entryways. The templon also became the foundation for what developed into the multi-tiered Russian style of barrier. By examining the templon we can begin to establish three stages in the development of Byzantine worship that point to the emergence of the solid Russian iconostasis.

The first stage began with the templon itself. Its origin can be traced to the waist-high partition that helped to "set off" and protect the emperor and his retinue from the surrounding crowds. Excellent examples of the imperial templon can be seen in the *bas relief* on the base of the obelisk of Theodosius in the Hippodrome in Istanbul.[27] This protective structure was eventually incorporated into the partition that would occupy a prominent place in the churches of Constantinople, including Justinian's Hagia Sophia.[28]

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[27] See Cheremeteff, "Transformation," 108.

[28] See Taft, "Decline of Communion," 27–50. Recalling an unpublished lecture by Cyril Mango, Taft stresses the practical purpose of the templon in Byzantine liturgical worship: "Rather than hiding the ritual, the templon merely controlled the audience in the 'catholic churches'.... So the chancel barrier originates from the concern for decorum and security in late antiquity, when church congregations were sometimes little better than an unruly mob" (ibid., 38).

Two examples predating Justinian's Great Church are the Church of St. John the Baptist, often referred to as Studios,[29] and the Church of the Mother of God in Chalkoprateia. The latter became renowned for keeping what was believed to be the zonē (sash or belt) of the Virgin. This garment, brought to Constantinople from Palestine around the fifth century, was among the city's most important relics. By the ninth century all Marian liturgical celebrations either began or ended at the Chalkoprateia. Both churches date back to the fifth century but, without question, Studios is the older and better preserved.[30] From 1907 to 1909 the Russian Archaeological Institute conducted a survey of Studios. The expedition was responsible for uncovering the marble pavement and the excavation of a cruciform crypt under the altar. The crypt probably held the relics of the monastery. Thanks to the work of archaeologists and architects, the existing fragments of the sanctuary have provided us with the earliest known sanctuary plan in Constantinople. This means that prior to the building of Justinian's Hagia Sophia the π-shaped altar partition was in use in what became one of the great monastic centers of Eastern Christendom.

At the dedication of Justinian's greatest basilica, Hagia Sophia, Paul Silentarius (sixth c.) described the chancel partition as a structure of twelve interspersed columns, joined by an architrave on top, with connecting templons on the bottom. Silentarius is our primary source for information on the arrangement of space and liturgy in Justinian's Hagia Sophia. His *Ekphrasis*, a poem of some 1,027 lines written in iambic hexameter,[31] helps our imaginations to enter the sacred space of Hagia Sophia:

> There is a separate space for the bloodless sacrifice, not of ivory or portions of cut stones or appointed copper, but this space is entirely surrounded by quarried silver and in this space covered by silver are the initiate distinguished from the harmonious voices of the crowd. Naked silver is also cast upon the floor, and the pillars also are entirely of silver, twice six these pillars are ablaze giving light to those afar.[32]

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[29] Studios was a senator who had the church of St. John built ca. 463. By the ninth century the Studite monastery, under the guidance of Abbot St. Theodore, had become a major center of monastic and liturgical reform. See Taft, *Byzantine Rite*, 52–56.

[30] For an introduction to the architecture of these two churches see Mathews, *Early Churches*, 11–41.

[31] See Macrides and Magdalino, "Architecture of Ekphrasis," 47–82.

[32] *Descriptio ecclesiae Sanctae Sophiae et Ambonis,* lines 682–715 and 871–883: Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 80–96; Mainstone, *Hagia*

In his *Ecclesiastical History and Mystical Contemplation*, St. Germanus of Constantinople (d. 733) speaks of railings (*kagkella*) separating the altar area from the nave.[33] No mention of height is given for these partitions, but the term *railings* points to a series of low (perhaps waist-high) structures connecting interspersed columns at the bottom. This reference complements the description of Silentarius, the depiction on the Hippodrome obelisk, and the reconstructed partition of Studios. The prominence of Hagia Sophia influenced the arrangement of liturgical space in and outside Constantinople, even though it cannot be assumed that the templon design of this basilica was universally adopted in the Byzantine Empire.

Though Hagia Sophia and churches similar in scale and spatial arrangement possessed a three-sided *π*-shaped partition extending from the apse, with appropriate entryways in the west, north, and south sides, not all chancel partitions maintained this three-sided configuration.[34] But whether the partition was three-sided or a simple one-sided horizontal structure connecting opposite sides of the apse, transparency remained a consistent feature. Thus, by the middle Byzantine period (8th to 13th centuries), the first stage of development had reached a certain level of consistency. Despite the paucity of evidence, A. W. Epstein suggests that the Constantinopolitan templon of this period could be conceived as "a colonnade closed at the bottom by ornamental parapet slabs and supporting an epistyle decorated with a figural programme, which often included a central Deesis."[35]

Though Justinian's Hagia Sophia did not provide the blueprint for subsequent ground plans of all Byzantine churches, S. G. Xydis stresses that the influence of the Great Church should not be minimized. Those areas of the empire that remained faithful to the Council of Chalcedon, and by extension to Justinian, had

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Sophia, 219; Mathews, *Early Churches*, 169; and Majeska, "Notes," 299–308. Still useful is Xydis, "Chancel Barrier," 1–24. Translation from Silentarius adapted by the author from Mango's version.

[33] See Greek text next to Paul Meyendorff's translation in Germanus of Constantinople, St., *On the Divine Liturgy*, 62. Unfortunately, Meyendorff translates *kagkella* as "barriers."

[34] For example, the monolithic churches of Cappadocia.

[35] Epstein, "Middle Byzantine Sanctuary Barrier," 15–16. See also p. 6, with descriptions of partitions by Theophanes Continuatus and Michael Attaliates.

churches that followed the basic plan of Hagia Sophia, including its altar partition. This can be seen in the churches of Asia Minor, the Crimea, and Bulgaria.[36]

The second stage leading to the solid iconostasis was characterized by the liturgical activity within the altar area. The dating of this stage is difficult to determine, since there seems to be some overlap with the middle Byzantine period. During this period there are significant developments in the use of liturgical space. With the renaissance of iconography, which began in the ninth century, and the ever increasing influence of the monks of Studios in Constantinople and St. Sabbas in Palestine, liturgical worship and piety began a new phase. At this time, the apse became the place where the concentration of liturgical movement and appointments were found. The sacristy, or *skeuophylakion*, having had its own separate space, began to disappear. The table of oblation, where the bread and wine to be consecrated at the liturgy are prepared, was now found in the apse. With the concentration of liturgical activity becoming increasingly confined to the altar or sanctuary area, the royal doors, which opened into the nave, eventually became located in the central opening of the chancel partition. The episcopal throne and *synthronon* (bench or semicircular tiered benches behind the altar table, where the bishops and presbyters sat during parts of the liturgical services) disappeared from the back of the apse, as did the ambon as a separate structure in the center of the nave.[37]

Changes to the location of structures and rituals around the altar area that coincided with the period of post-iconoclastic Byzantium should not be associated with the introduction of the solid iconostasis. The victory of the icon can be discounted as a primary contributing factor, since transparent partitions separating altar from nave continued to be an important feature of liturgical architecture after the ninth century. The same caution must be applied when trying to connect the practice of infrequent reception of the Eucharist with the solid barrier. Even if one were to factor in Thomas Mathews' observation that by the time of the Council in Trullo (692) infrequent communion was the rule,[38] the chancel partition, as an established structure, nevertheless remained transparent.

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[36] See Xydis, "Chancel Barrier," 18.

[37] See Taft, *Byzantine Rite*, for a well-outlined history of these liturgical changes.

[38] Mathews, *Early Churches*, 173.

However, the work of S. Gerstel shows that by the 11th century the curtain began to emerge as a fixture of the chancel partition. The purpose of the curtain was to separate and hide the clergy's activities from the eyes of the faithful during parts of the liturgy. A letter of a certain Niketas, an official of Hagia Sophia, to Niketas Stethatos, abbot of Studios, discusses the use of the curtain, presumably in and around Constantinople:

> In other places I have seen with my own eyes even a curtain hung around the holy bema [the raised portion of an Orthodox church where the altar rests—ed.] at the time of the mysteries. It is spread and conceals, so that not even the priests themselves are seen by those outside. This is what the Lord Eustathios (1019–1025), most blessed among the patriarchs, did.[39]

The pervasiveness of the use of the curtain in Byzantine churches is hard to determine. Nor can it be determined if the use of the curtain remained a permanent feature of worship in any particular church structure. Nevertheless, changes to the altar partition were beginning to appear.

While the templon during this second stage continued to be transparent, a new feature of the chancel partition began to make its appearance. In the 12th-century Pantocrator ('All-Sovereign') Monastery in Constantinople, a range of images was fixed to the *top* of the architrave.[40] It is difficult to determine how widespread this development was for both churches of major metropolitan centers and churches in the provinces.

During the second stage, in which changes occurred around the altar, iconography corresponding to the evolving festal cycle of the Orthodox Church also began to appear. According to Epstein, the templon in the Pantocrator Monastery displayed scenes from Christ's life, including Palm Sunday, the Crucifixion, Anastasis

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[39] Niketas Stethatos, *Opuscules et letters*, ed. Jean Darrouzes (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1961), 232–234, quoted in Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 8. Unlike scholars such as Epstein ("Middle Byzantine Sanctuary Barrier"), who date the solid iconostasis after the 12th century, Gerstel suggests that the solid altar partition began to appear in Byzantium at this time.

[40] The Pantocrator Monastery, founded by Empress Irene (1118–1124), was completed by her husband, John II, after her death. See Epstein, "Middle Byzantine Sanctuary Barrier," 2–10.

(Resurrection), Ascension, and Pentecost.[41] The earliest mention of a (possible) festal icon being made available for veneration in liturgical celebration comes from the *typikon* of the Monastery of Keharitomenis in Constantinople, founded by Irene, wife of Alexis Comnenus (d. 1118).[42] There is also the *menologion* (menology) of Basil II (d. 1025), which contains the codification of the liturgical calendar, including the festal icons and their respective celebrations.[43] In addition to scenes from the life of Christ, there were other chancel partitions of this second stage of development that displayed the deisis icons. From the *diataxis* of the Monastery of Christ the All Merciful (Paniktirmos, ca. 1078) we know that the "templon has in the middle of the Deesis and (on either side?) the narrative of the honorable and holy Forerunner [John the Baptist]."[44] At the Russian monastery of St. Panteleimon on Mt. Athos, an inventory list dating to ca. 1142 refers to 90 icons,[45] including a deisis and 12 festal icons. By the 15th century the deisis and the festal icons would become fixed tiers of the solid iconostasis in Russia.

The 15th century marks the beginning of the third stage of development for the iconostasis, a stage in which the most dramatic changes leading to the solid and vertically developed iconostasis in Russia occur. It is also the most difficult stage to outline.

Coinciding with the metamorphosis of the transparent chancel barrier into a multi-tiered solid structure is the 14th-century hesychast controversy in Constantinople. The remaining sections of this study will suggest that the development of the Russian iconostasis might be linked to the clash that occurred within hesychasm, between the sectarian dualists who upheld unceasing prayer while rejecting or minimizing the sacraments, on the one

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[41] Epstein believes that these and other icons from the Pantocrator now make up the "uppermost enamel plaques of the Pala d'Oro of San Marco in Venice." Epstein, "Middle Byzantine Sanctuary Barrier," 5.

[42] It should be stressed that other than references to the icon of the Mother of God, which was accessible for veneration during the Feast of the Dormition, there is no mention of venerating icons corresponding to the other feasts. However, since the Dormition is the first and most detailed of the feasts listed in the *typikon*, one can surmise that it is the model for the others. See Thomas and Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 2: 696–697.

[43] See Labrecque-Pervouchine, *L'Iconostase*, 39.

[44] Epstein, "Middle Byzantine Sanctuary Barrier," 6.

[45] Labrecque-Pervouchine, *L'Iconostase*, 39.

hand, and those who sought to maintain a balance between prayer and sacramental participation, on the other.

V. Hesychasm and Sectarian Dualism

By the time of the Palamite controversy in 14th-century Constantinople, hesychasts—those practicing silent prayer or prayer of the heart—were being accused by their opponents, specifically Barlaam of Calabria (ca. 1290–1348), of practicing a form of Messalianism.[46] Generally speaking, the Messalians favored continuous prayer over participation in the church's sacramental life. Though Palamas had contacts with Messalian monks, he strongly stressed the importance of sacraments to his flock in Thessalonika.[47] In addition to his sermons, the *Tomos Hagioriticus*—a kind of hesychast manifesto also composed by Palamas in defense of the monks on Mt. Athos—distanced itself from Messalianism by condemning it.[48]

It is possible to suggest that consideration be given to the idea that movements within (and without) mainstream hesychasm may have helped to create the spiritual and therefore theological climate for the development of the solid multi-tiered iconostasis. The roots of some of these movements extend as far back as the fourth century and the emergence of the monastic movement. Usually when these movements are categorized, they fall under the heading of *dualism*. But as Father John Meyendorff has rightly stressed, there is a "vagueness" that accompanies the term.[49]

Often *dualism* has been associated with the incompatibility of matter and spirit. While this was the case in some movements, including Messalianism, there is also a broader usage that serves our purposes. While dualistic movements varied in practice and

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[46] The best study on St. Gregory Palamas and the hesychast controversies is Meyendorff's *Introduction*. For a history of the Jesus Prayer see Hausherr, *Name of Jesus*.

[47] See e.g. Homilies 8, 15, 20, translated by Veniamin, *Homilies*; also Homily LVI, ed. Oikonomos, Athens, 1863, translated by Jérôme Cler, in *Grégoire Palamas: Homélies*. A separate study is needed to compare and contrast Palamas' teachings on unceasing prayer and sacramental life vis-à-vis his monastic and parochial audiences.

[48] Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Graeca,* vol. 150, col. 1229A ff.

[49] Meyendorff, "St. Basil," 227.

manifestation, they shared a common trait, which was the emphasis of continuous prayer over sacramental life. This certainly was the case with Messalianism (see section VI); hence its association with hesychasm by those who perceived the prayer of the heart as dualistic and sectarian. Characterized by ascetical effort and unceasing prayer, sectarian dualism sought to supplant liturgical worship and sacramental life. By the time of Palamas, *dualism* had developed into a movement that focused more on the polarization of prayer and sacraments than that of matter and spirit. Given this emphasis, sectarian dualism may provide an important theological perspective from which to see how the iconostasis in its completed form obscured not only the relationship between prayer and sacraments, but also the relationship of history and eschatology. Of course, these notions are contingent on whether it can be shown that sectarian dualism existed in 15th-century Russia.

Dimitri Obolensky is the scholar who showed that Messalianism, or sectarian dualism, spread from Byzantium to the Balkans.[50] Did it also spread to Russia? Unfortunately, there are few written sources to guide us. But Obolensky does offer some "scattered hints" that may support the idea that "individual Bogomils," the Balkan counterpart to Byzantine Messalians, "may have proselytized in Russia between the 11th and the 15th centuries."[51] Even if sectarian proselytizing was unorganized and intermittent, four hundred years seem to be enough time to create local movements that could generate enough energy to form a liturgical and social ethos at odds with the balanced spirituality of Palamite hesychasm.

The dualism coming into the Balkans and Russia sought to reform both culture and Orthodox Christianity. During the 14th and 15th centuries, the Strigol'niki and Judaizers made inroads into northwestern Rus'. The Strigol'niki stressed moral purity and ascetic rigor. They refused to recognize the established church hierarchy and rejected the sacraments.[52] How widespread the Strigol'niki movement was cannot be accurately ascertained. But that it

[50] Obolensky, *Bogomils*. Also see his *Byzantine Commonwealth*, 121.
[51] Obolensky, *Bogomils*, 277.
[52] Speransky, *Istoriia drevnei russkoi literatury*, 2: 51–53. Obolensky, *Bogomils*, 279.

had become a movement of considerable influence may be deduced from its penetration into Moscow and its subsequent condemnation by the Council of 1490. In addition to the Strigol'niki, Judaizers were also numbered among the Novgorodian heretics. In a letter dated 25 February 1489 to Ioasaf, archbishop of Rostov and Yaroslavl', Gennadii, archbishop of Novgorod, identifies the Judaizers with the Messalians. Joseph of Volokolamsk (d. 1515) also listed the Judaizers as Messalians.[53]

Moving southeast to Moscow from Novgorod, sectarian dualism had a local social appeal. According to Obolensky, dualism infused Slavic society with a renewed thirst for "personal righteousness, a desire for social justice, and pity for innocent suffering."[54] Given the social appeal of these sects, coupled with their rejection of the sacraments, is it possible that they could have had an impact on Orthodox worship, including the use of liturgical space?

Strictly speaking, these sectarian dualist movements cannot be directly traced to hesychasm. However, one should not be too hasty in assuming that there is an unbridgeable chasm between Russian dualism and those who practiced *hesychia* ('quietude' or 'stillness,' referring to the unceasing prayer of the heart or what is more commonly known as the Jesus Prayer). That St. Gregory Palamas had to defend the hesychasts from being accused of Messalianism might also suggest there was some truth to the accusations. Given the theological refinement of Palamas and his articulation of the distinction between the divine essence and energies, it is quite possible that some hesychasts were unable to keep abreast of his teachings and polemics. Consequently, the historian and theologian can venture to assume that the official hesychasm of the Orthodox Church as it was defended by Palamas may not have been universally accepted by the hesychasts themselves. Such a situation would also imply that, as with any spiritual or theological movement, the spread of hesychasm also included its aberrations, particularly those disregarding the place of sacraments in Christian life. A re-examination of Palamas's writings may show that a battle with two fronts was being waged about the practice of hesychasm. On one front, Palamas sought to demonstrate that the opponents of hesychasm were not only

[53] Obolensky, *Bogomils*, 280.

[54] Obolensky, *Byzantine Commonwealth*, 121.

arguing against an established practice of Orthodox spirituality, but also were opposing Orthodoxy itself. On the other, Palamas sought to articulate, especially in his sermons, the importance of sacramental life and to correct the extremes of sectarian dualism.

VI. Hesychasm and the Russian Iconostasis

In order to appreciate hesychasm as a spiritual movement that played a role in the formation of culture—both Byzantine and Slavic—one first must liberate it from the confines of the monastic cloister. Certainly, hesychasm was a movement that originated among monks. But by the 12th and 13th centuries, it had become associated with, and was even considered a driving force behind, the Palaeologan renaissance. This burst of spiritual and artistic creativity breached the walls of the monastery and extended into the Balkans and Russia.

Seen from this broader perspective, hesychasm permeated Byzantine and Slavic culture to the extent that it helped to create the basis for what can be termed Orthodox Christian humanism. Unlike the humanism of the West, the Christian humanism of the East focused on the transfiguration or deification of the person, enabled by participation in the uncreated light of God. The transfiguration of Christ before his disciples described in the synoptic Gospels became, for the hesychasts, the biblical affirmation par excellence of human participation in the life of God.[55]

With and apart from its dualistic tendencies, hesychasm in 14th-century Russia was to become a driving force behind a developing spirituality. As in Byzantium, hesychasm in Russia was becoming a cultural phenomenon with spiritual/theological, artistic, and political dimensions. In part this can be attributed to the role of the hesychast patriarchs of Constantinople. From 1350 to the beginning of the 15th century, six of the seven patriarchs of Constantinople were hesychasts.[56] Even though the political waning of the Byzantine Empire was already advanced, the patriarchs of Constantinople still wielded, on behalf of the emperor, political

[55] See Mark 9:2 and parallels.

[56] Callistos I (1350–1354/1355–1363); Philotheos Kokkinos (1354–1355/1368–1376); Macarios, a non-hesychast (1376–1379/1390–1391); Neilos (1379–1388); Antonios (1389–1390/1391–1397); Callistos Xanthopoulos (1397); Matthew I (1397–1410).

influence that helped to hold the commonwealth together.[57] Orthodox Christianity, including hesychasm, was a political adhesive that helped to maintain Byzantine religious hegemony over Russia in the 14th century, which also aided hesychasm's penetration into Russia.

The relationship between Patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos of Constantinople—a friend, disciple, and biographer of Palamas—and Cyprian of Kiev and Moscow exemplifies the political and ecclesiastical bonds forged between Byzantium and Russia. By the time Cyprian became Metropolitan of Kiev and Moscow (1390–1406), maintaining unity with Constantinople was a primary concern, due to the political and ecclesiastical climate that had previously threatened to draw Kiev and Moscow into the sphere of Lithuania. Given the tension among Constantinople, Lithuania, and the Metropolitanate of Kiev and Moscow, political and ecclesiastical stability was the concern of the day.

As a sign of his political and ecclesiastical fidelity to Constantinople, Metropolitan Cyprian sought to introduce Russia to the expanded version of the *Synodikon of Orthodoxy*. Read on the first Sunday of Great Lent, the *Synodikon* affirms the teachings of Orthodoxy while listing and anathematizing its opponents. Originally the expanded *Synodikon* marked the final defeat of iconoclasm in Constantinople in 843.

Coinciding with the first Sunday of Great Lent, the celebration marking the end of the second wave of iconoclasm was both a political and an ecclesiastical event. By seeking to use the expanded *Synodikon* of Constantinople, Cyprian's fidelity to New Rome sought not only to maintain the political bond between Byzantium and Russia, but also to ensure theological continuity with the mother church. This unity and continuity of faith included the acceptance and defense of an integrated hesychasm, since the expanded version of the *Synodikon* upheld the teachings of Palamas and condemned his opponents. Hence, rather than being an

[57] See Obolensky, *Byzantine Commonwealth*,. 2: "With characteristic semantic ambiguity, the Byzantines applied the terms used to describe their own state—*basileia* (empire), *oikoumene* (the inhabited universe), *politeuma* (government, community)—to group the nations over which they claimed sovereignty. The word 'commonwealth', likewise ambiguous is used ... as a rough equivalent of at least the last of these Greek terms. No precise constitutional significance should be ascribed to it, nor is its purpose to suggest any modern parallel."

exercise associated with the mental and bodily techniques practiced in the monastic cell, hesychasm, as taught and defended by Palamas, was a fundamental component of Orthodoxy to be embraced, at least theoretically, by all the faithful.

For Cyprian, the *Synodikon* was a standard of theological and political solidarity with Byzantium. Writing to the clergy of Pskov in 1395, Cyprian states with some irritation the need to adhere to the Orthodoxy of Constantinople: "I sent you the correct text of the *Synodikon* of Constantinople, which we also follow here [in Moscow] in commemorating [the Orthodox] and cursing the heretics! You should also conform yourself to it."[58] Was Cyprian's letter prompted by a political or theological breaking of ranks on the part of the Pskov clergy? In any case, we are given the impression that Russian conformity to Byzantine Orthodoxy was not universally established. A lack of uniformity in practice and teaching would have made possible the existence and development of a type of hesychasm that deviated from Palamas and Orthodoxy in general.

Since the *Synodikon* was perceived by Cyprian as a means to secure a stronger theological and political bond between Constantinople and Moscow/Kiev, is it possible that he was using the updated *Synodikon* to address the problem of sectarian dualists? The question is raised for two reasons. First, given the various strata and recensions of the *Synodikon* added over the course of three Byzantine dynasties,[59] sectarian dualism appears as a recurring heresy. What had been condemned by the Council of Ephesus in 431 persisted and spread. And second, as the *Synodikon* maintains, dualists—in particular Messalians and Bogomils—are associated with the detractors of hesychasm and of Gregory Palamas. Among the six anathemas hurled at the opponents of hesychasm, the Messalians were included in the company of Barlaam and Akindynos, who maintained that the divine essence is visible.[60] The heretical idea that the divine essence is visible lends itself to the theologically incorrect idea that it may be apprehended intellectually and physically.[61] Because detractors of hesychasm

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[58] *Russkaia istoricheskaia biblioteka* 6 (1880): col. 241, trans. Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*, 260n119.

[59] The three dynasties are: Macedonian (867–1056); Comnenan (1081–1185) and Palaeologan (1259–1453).

[60] *Le Synodikon de L'Orthodoxie,* 81, lines 579–580.

[61] Gouillard in *Le Synodikon de L'Orthodoxie*, 240n10.

considered the divine essence knowable, and their goal was to apprehend the essence of God, one has the impression that by the 14th century the core of dualism no longer adhered to the strict ontological polarity of matter and spirit, created and uncreated.[62] Is the *Synodikon,* in its defense of hesychasm and Palamas, referring to some other polarity?

According to the manuscript tradition of the *Synodikon*, sometime between the 10th and 11th centuries sectarian dualists were implicitly tied to a clandestine movement. Converts, including clergy, from Orthodoxy to sectarian dualism were more or less able to remain undercover, since they feigned membership in the official church. According to the *Synodikon*, such converts continued to participate "in a hypocritical way" in the church's sacramental life. Thus, they would accept the Eucharist not as the "precious body and blood of the Savior," but as "mere bread and wine."[63]

Given the tenacity of sectarian dualism to survive and spread, can we detect in Cyprian's desire to have the Russian Church follow the updated *Synodikon* of Constantinople a need to confront dualism on his own turf? As a clandestine movement with no visible parallel institution, sectarian dualism, ironically, would find its breeding ground in the Orthodox Church. By the end of the 14th and beginning of the 15th centuries, can we find in Russia a type of sectarian dualism that was in a new stage of development, where the core belief stressed the polarity between prayer and the sacraments?

These issues bring us to two iconographers, the monastic Saints Feofan (Theophanes) Grek (ca. 1340–ca. 1410) and Andrei Rublev (ca. 1360–1430?). But before their work can be placed within the conflict between balanced and dualistic hesychasm, the question to be raised is whether they were hesychasts themselves, and, if not, whether they were influenced by the hesychast movement?

As noted above, Byzantine hesychasm was a movement not confined to the monastery. In the case of Feofan, even if he had not been trained as a hesychast monk, one cannot easily dismiss

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[62] The polarization of matter and spirit/created and uncreated have Gnostic antecedents to which Messalianism was attached. See, Runciman, *Medieval Manichee*, 5–25.

[63] *Le Synodikon de L'Orthodoxie*, 69, lines 367ff. in Gouillard, 237; and Meyendorff, *Introduction*, 55–57.

the fact that he must have been aware of the hesychast controversy in Constantinople and that he also knew and studied the iconography of the Paleologan renaissance that filled the churches of the Byzantine capital and neighboring areas. The words of Father John Meyendorff concisely outline the career and contributions of Feofan:

> By far the most famous Byzantine master working in Russian is undoubtedly Theophanes "the Greek." His career is known to us from the chronicles, but also, quite interestingly, from a letter written around 1415 by Epiphanius the Wise, author of the *Lives* of St. Sergius and St. Stephen of Perm, to the abbot Cyril of Tver. Having first worked in Constantinople, Chalcedon, Galata and Caffa, Theophanes came to Novgorod and decorated, in 1378, the Church of the Transfiguration, and other monuments. He also worked in Nizhnii Novgorod and, finally in Moscow, particularly in the Church of the Annunciation and the Archangel Michael in the Kremlin.[64]

The vibrant colors used by Theophan and his ability to depict the inner movement of the human person towards God point to his personal genius as an iconographer and his familiarity with hesychasm. In addition, his accents of bold white strokes in the faces and vestments painted in the Church of the Transfiguration and the colors of the deisis row in the Moscow Kremlin's Annunciation Cathedral attempt to represent the eternal dynamism into the divine life.

Little is known about Rublev. Nevertheless, his relationship with Feofan and the form of Russian monasticism influenced by St. Sergii of Radonezh (d. 1394) no doubt added to Rublev's knowledge of the life and thought of hesychasm. That Rublev spent time in the lavra founded by St. Sergii also attests to his familiarity with Sergii's monastic rule.

Perhaps the best source that helps to establish a hesychast context for Rublev is the *Life of St. Sergii* by Epiphanii the Wise. Though the text makes no mention of hesychasm as a movement, there are strong signs pointing to St. Sergii's connection with balanced hesychasm. According to Epiphanii, it is Patriarch Philotheos of Constantinople who instructs Sergii to form his monks into a cenobitic community in which everything was to be held in common. Cenobitic monasticism also extended community life beyond

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[64] Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*, 140–141.

the cell and refectory, so that the rhythm of prayer and work was regulated for all. The *Life* by Epiphanii also highlighted the centrality of liturgical and sacramental life. References to the daily celebration of the Eucharist and the appearance of light surrounding St. Sergii even at the time of his death are more than minor traces of hesychastic overtones. "The saint's face, unlike that of other dead, glowed with the life of the living...."[65] The *Life of St. Sergii* calls for further investigation into the liturgical and theological influences of Byzantine hesychasm on subsequent hagiographies in both Greek and Slavonic.[66]

Given the above, it seems unlikely that Feofan and Rublev were oblivious to or unaffected by the hesychast movement. Could it be that the unusually large panels of the deisis row[67] on the iconostasis of the Annunciation Cathedral in the Moscow Kremlin were an attempt by Feofan and his assistants to defend a balanced hesychasm—that is, a hesychasm in which there was no polarity between prayer and the sacraments? The size of the panels, the posture of prayer assumed by the figures and their placement above the main entrance to the altar table where the Eucharist is celebrated point to a collective statement stressing the balance of prayer and sacramental life.

The same question can be raised regarding Rublev's "Trinity" icon, which stresses the centrality of Eucharistic life. Was this icon an attempt to balance and clarify the understanding of Byzantine hesychasm as it was expressed in the *Synodikon*, within the walls of the monastery founded by St. Sergii and dedicated to the Trinity? More than any of the other masterpieces of Rublev, his Trinity icon literally places the Eucharist in the center of its composition. One can easily notice how the inner outline of the angels on the left and right of the image form a chalice. Contained within this chalice is the Eucharistic chalice which rests on the altar.

Can we see a joint effort on the part of these two artists to articulate through their iconography a hesychast response to sectarian dualism? Is it more than a coincidence that Moscow's Palatine Chapel, with its imposing deisis, and the Troitse-Sergievo Monastery, one of the great centers of Russian spirituality, with its engaging Trinity icon, were formulating through iconography a balanced

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[65] Translated in Fedotov, *A Treasury*, 54–84.

[66] See Tachaios, "Le Mouvement," 114.

[67] Each panel measures six by three feet.

hesychasm of prayer and the Eucharist? Can we detect an alliance between the Russian Church and its grand princes to establish a balanced hesychasm that would maintain political and theological unity with Byzantium?

If we venture to offer affirmative answers to the above questions, then we can begin to see two theological movements in conflict [with each other] within the same church. It seems that we cannot separate the results of this conflict from the transformation of the transparent templon into the multi-tiered solid iconostasis. As icon panels began to fill the spaces of the templon, the solid iconostasis continued its structural ascent, so that by the 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries the solid iconostasis basically consisted of six tiers. In descending order, these tiers are 1) Forefathers, 2) Patriarchs, 3) Prophets, 4) Feasts, 5) Deisis, and 6) Icons for local, accessible veneration.[68]

During this transformation, the place of the Eucharist in Orthodox worship becomes visually obscured. As for the frequency of receiving the Eucharist, we know that by the 14th and 15th centuries the chalice was rarely approached by the laity. Based on the *Izmaragd* (*The Emerald*) manuscripts dating back to the 14th century, it seems that liturgical life became the context for moral exhortation. Penance and ascetical discipline presented in these texts resonated with the moral rigor of the sectarian dualists. Coinciding with the enclosure of the altar from the nave, can the ethical displacement of the Eucharist also be seen as a contributing factor to the development of the solid iconostasis?[69] If so, then moral improvement and perfection became the goals of the Christian. The panoply of saints depicted on the iconostasis showed them as model Christians and not as disciples of Christ who, by engaging in spiritual warfare whether inside or outside the monastic cloister, were nourished by prayer and the reception of the Eucharist.

Given the appearance of the solid iconostasis and what Fedotov called the "decrease of interest in the Eucharistic significance of the Liturgy,"[70] what changes occurred in the semiotics of both liturgy and icon? Can we detect a shift in the understanding of the

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[68] See Labrecque-Pervouchine, *L'Iconostase*, 89. See also Zhuravieva, "Forefathers Tier" 490ff, English summary, 737–738 and Bobrik, "Last Supper Icon," 525 ff., English summary, 739–741.

[69] See Fedotov, *Russian Religious Mind,* 2: 108–112.

[70] Fedotov, *Russian Religious Mind,* 2: 357.

function and purpose of liturgical worship? Answers to these questions require a separate study. To conclude, however, it is possible to say that the solid iconostasis helped to create a vision of liturgy and icon that had little, if anything, to do with the interpenetration of history and eschatology.[71]

The transformation of liturgical space into one new and deified reality held within the mystery of the Eucharist was blurred. The divine/human synergy necessary for the *reformation* and *transfiguration* of the cosmos became obstructed. The emphasis on Christ's second coming as both an inaugurated and anticipated reality slipped into the background of liturgical worship. The quest for individual perfection displaced *Marana Tha*. The accent on unceasing prayer, participation in the essence of God, and ethics re-conceived the icon as the depiction of a moral person deified by his participation in the uncreated light of God, which precluded participation in the deified bread and wine of the Eucharist. The world as sacrament and therefore the *perichoresis* of matter and spirit, divinity and humanity, became obscured. The solid iconostasis disrupted the balanced hesychasm of Palamas articulated and seen through the iconography of Feofan Grek, Andrei Rublev, and their disciples. From available materials it appears that another theology/spirituality continued to develop that would be manifested in the tensions, struggles, and schisms that ensued over the course of Russian ecclesiastical history.

[71] For an opposing view see Constas, "Symeon of Thessalonike," 179–183. Concluding his defense of the iconostasis with the insights of Fr. Pavel Florensky's *Iconostasis*, the author overlooks the fact that the solid altar partition did not in any way contribute to the recovery of Eucharistic life for either the Byzantines or Slavs.

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ROUND UP THE USUALS AND A FEW OTHERS: GLIMPSES INTO THE KNOWLEDGE, ROLE, AND USE OF CHURCH FATHERS IN RUS′ AND RUSSIAN MONASTICISM, LATE 11TH TO EARLY 16TH CENTURIES

David M. Goldfrank*

This essay originated at the time that ASEC was in its early stages and in response to a request that I write something about the church Fathers in medieval Rus′. I already knew finding the patrology concerning just the original Greek and Syriac texts is nothing short of a researcher's black hole. Given all the complexities involved in the manuscript traditions associated with such superstar names as Basil of Caesarea, Ephrem the Syrian, John Chrysostom, and Macarius of wherever (no kidding), to name a few[1] and all of

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[1] An excellent example of this is Plested, *Macarian Legacy.* For the specific problem of Pseudo-Macarius/Pseudo-Pseudo-Macarius as it relates to this essay, see *NSAW*, 78–79.

Tapestry of Russian Christianity: Studies in History and Culture. Nickolas Lupinin, Donald Ostrowski and Jennifer B. Spock, eds. Columbus, Ohio: Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures and the Resource Center for Medieval Slavic Studies, The Ohio State University, 2016, 71–118.

their pseudo-accretions, I durst not attempt anything approaching the superb, comprehensive work of Francis J. Thompson.[2] I reckoned instead to assay to provide the interested reader a sense of, first, which of these devotionally, ethically, and intellectually authoritative ecclesiastics, not just writers, were known in Rus′ in the Kievan period, plus how they then appeared to monks and writers. And second, I hoped to show how these and other church Fathers figured in the writings of Muscovy's leading monastic theoreticians around 1500 when Russians, as we can now call them, were not only, as recipients and spiritual consumers, experiencing these Fathers, but also, in a few select cases utilizing and manipulating them, as in the original writings of Nil Sorskii and Iosif Volotskii, the authors of Russia's earliest treatises. I am well aware of the shortcomings of my own treatment of patristic sources: not only in Iosif's monastic corpus, for which I never had the chance to consult a full body of Slavic manuscripts and translations, but also for Nil's writings, where I so succeeded.[3] Moreover, as I am only in the initial stages of my work with Iosif's *Prosvetitel′* (*Enlightener*) sources, what I say here will not in any way approach what I hope to provide when the third of my Iosif-Nil-Iosif translations cum studies appears. Finally, the number of questions one can ask of these Rus′ and Russian monastic texts is legion. So I warn the reader and apologize ahead of time for the shortcomings, but at the same time hope that this examination of their relationship to many of the church Fathers bolsters my general contention that Nil and Iosif represented allied wings of the same general movement, not rivals or opponents.

* * *

It is the year 1070, and 6,578 years since the Creation according to Orthodox Christian calculations. Let us imagine ourselves observing a small monastery in Kiev (a major political center and trading city at the time), perhaps a cloister founded by the late Rus′ *kagan* ("chieftain") and grand prince, Iaroslav Vladimirovich (r. 1019–1054), for the express purpose of training native clerics for his still chiefly pagan realm. With, let us say, eight Rus′ students between the ages of nine and 19, and staffed by a Rus′ priest, a

[2] Thompson, "Made in Russia," "A Guide to Translations"; and "Corpus of Translations."

[3] *MRIV*, 61–70; and *NSAW*, 68–80.

Rus' deacon, as well as a Bulgarian monk-teacher, the monastery functions chiefly as a school, secondarily as a scriptorium. The students attend all the daily monastic services and thereby learn the chants as well as reading, and they hear the saints' lives as they dine under supervision at the monks' table. During their spiritual training, the dexterous will acquire orthography.[4]

What notion of church Fathers do these future Rus' priests, monks, and book-copyists have? The very word *father* is widely used, applied to all authoritative clergy, living and dead. "Our saintly fathers" (*prepodobnye ottsy nashi*), however, refers to the dead, the perfect ones, who showed Christian Orthodox how to live, defend the faith, and die, as lay people or as monastics, and are somewhat fused together as they are presented. Such is the nature of sacred literature.

The perfect ones derived their authority within the church from a variety of sources and activities. A large number of them—including women—were martyrs to the faith. Some, starting in the second century, composed authoritative church literature. Others left an authoritative recorded oral tradition, as in the *paterica* (collected sayings or lives) of the desert Fathers. Still others did both. A few of them, whom we number today among the *doctors* or teaching Fathers, stand out for the liturgies associated with their names (Basil the Great of Caesarea, ca. 330–ca. 379, John Chrysostom [Golden-Mouth], 345–407, and Pope Gregory I "the Great," ca. 540–604),[5] for their monastic regulations (Basil again and Theodore the Studite, d. 829), for their regularly preached sermons (Chrysostom), for the iconographic depictions of them (here Gregory the Theologian of Nazianzus, ca. 329–ca. 389, joins Basil and Chrysostom as one of the especially revered "Three Bishops"), or for churches and monasteries erected in their honor (e.g. Cyril of Alexandria, 376–444).

Consider the people or events found most often singled out for a given day in the calendric sections of the 14 extant Gospels

[4] For the question of whether Rus' *literati* (or Bulgarians and others in Rus') effected translations in Rus', see Thomson, "Guide to Slavonic Translations," 27–36. See also Thomson, "Made in Russia," 295–354; Alekseev, "K istorii russkoi perevodicheskoi shkoly XII v.," 154–198; and Alekseev, "Kto-chto o perevodakh v drevnei Rusi," 278–296.

[5] Basil and Chrysostom have liturgies attributed to them; by tradition, if not authenticated scholarship, Gregory created or crystallized the Orthodox Lenten Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified, as well as, for the West, the almost universally employed Gregorian Chant.

from before the Mongol invasion, or in other such Gospels, *Apostols* (Acts and Epistles together), and service books through the 14th century (about 175 more). In culling through these texts we discover over 155 single, double, or group listings of martyrs, followed by 46 New Testament and expanded Apostolic entries, a number which grows to 53 if we include such supraterrestrial phenomena as the Synaxes[6] of the Theotokos, of John the Forerunner (Baptist), and of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel. We also note 18 miraculous events, such as the multiple discoveries of the head of John the Forerunner, and about 25 wonder-working bishops, maybe a third of them from Constantinople. Some of these bishops overlapped with the approximately 15 non-writing "confessors," half of whom struggled against Iconoclasm, the last great Eastern heresy before the conversion of the Balkan Slavs. Among the other holy people celebrated in the calendar are perhaps 15 non-writing ascetics, such as: the charitable physicians Cosmos and Damian (d. 283); the two Syrian stylites named Symeon (ca. 361–459, 521–596) along with the first stylite's disciple Daniel (ca. 409–ca. 493); the desert Fathers Paul the Simple, a disciple of Anthony the Great (d. ca. 350), Onouphrius (300s), Poimen (d. ca. 450), and Moses the African of Scete (fl. ca. 400);[7] Anthony's thaumaturgic disciple Hilarion (291–371); the versatile hermits Euthymius the Great (376–473), John Kalybites (400s), and Patapius (seventh century); and three female monastics: the multiple foundress Melania of Rome (d. 439),[8] the famed but patrician and perhaps legendary "repentant harlot" and solitary Mary of Egypt (ca. 344–421);[9] and the pseudo-eunuch/monk Ephrosynia of Alexandria (400s).[10]

So it was in a continuous annual series, alongside the above-named sacred people and events, that our aspiring Rus' clerics heard in solemnity the names of the authoritative patristic writers and prelates. From among the earliest Fathers they knew of the

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[6] *Synaxis* (*sobor* in Church Slavic, and having the same root as *synagogue*) = religious gathering.

[7] Allegedly, this immensely strong ex-slave, who could swim the crocodile-infested Nile pulling four rams, once led a band of 75 robbers, and later founded a cloister, appropriately for the legend, with 75 monks.

[8] It could also be her mother, St. Melania the Elder (d. 431), who founded one monastery in Palestine.

[9] Stevenson, "Holy Sinner," 19–40; Kouli, "Life of Mary of Egypt," 65–95.

[10] Having run away after her marriage, she disguised herself as a eunuch and entered a male monastery to avoid discovery.

first-century Dionysius the Areopagite,[11] Clement of Rome (d. ca. 160),[12] and Justin Martyr (ca. 100–ca. 163/167); from the generation of Emperor Constantine I (r. 308–337) and the First Ecumenical Council (325) came Methodius of Olympus or Patara (d. 311)[13] and Pope Silvester I of Rome (d. 334). The readings and calendar introduced, from the Arian controversy-dominated fourth century, Athanasius the Great of Alexandria (ca. 298–373) and Ephrem of Syria (c. 303–373), as well as the renowned Cappadocian Fathers Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil of Caesarea, and Gregory of Nyssa, (ca. 331–ca. 396) with their less noted colleague Amphilochus of Iconium (d. 400). From this period also came Cyril of Jerusalem (315–386), John Chrysostom, and the Latin Father Ambrose of Milan (340–397).

From later generations Rus' clerics heard more names. Among those fighting Nestorianism and Monophysitism were Cyril of Alexandria and Pope Leo I (the Great, d. 461); and from the primarily monastic Fathers, they celebrated Pachomius (ca. 292–346), Anthony the Great, Macarius of Egypt (300s), Theodosius the Great (d. 529), Sabas of Jerusalem (ca. 440–531), and John Climacus (fl. seventh century). Defenders of Orthodoxy from the first three Byzantine centuries include Patriarch Sophronius of Jerusalem (d. 638), the monastic mystic Maximus the Confessor (580–662), the hymnographer Andrew of Crete (d. early 700s), the cenobitic reformer Theodore the Studite, as well as one of his successors, the hymnographer Clement the Studite (d. ca. 868), and another sacral composer, Joseph (d. 883). The central Latin cenobitic monastic Father, Benedict of Nursia (d. 547), and the influential philosopher-theologian-hymnographer-apologist John of Damascus (c. 675–750) are less prominent among the listed names. The favorite Latin Father in the East, Pope Gregory the Great,[14] received even less attention and the two greatest writers among the leading Latin *doctors*, Jerome (ca. 340–420) and Augustine of

[11] The works attributed to Dionysius probably stem from the 400s.

[12] Most writings attributed to Clement (by tradition, the fourth pope) are spurious.

[13] The influential *Revelation* attributed to Methodius, however, stems from the seventh century.

[14] Pope of Rome, 590–604. To the Greeks he was *ho Gregorios ho Dialogos* (the Dialogist), from the four *Dialogues* he composed—the second being the *Life* of St. Benedict of Nursia—and the Slavs called him either Grigorii *Besedovnik* (the Converser) or, via an inventive pun, Grigorii *Dvoeslov* (Double Sermon).

Hippo (354–430), none at all—a circumstance that is somewhat surprising in light of the evidence of some Western influence on Orthodox Slavic calendars, especially the earliest.[15]

In so classifying the church Fathers, are we going down an erroneous path? Our medieval churchmen, while recognizing certain leading monastic authorities, would have considered any separation of church Fathers into categories of monastic and non-monastic artificial and unacceptable, and with reason. Starting in the 300s, many church Fathers renowned primarily as bishops—for example, Athanasius of Alexandria, John Chrysostom, Gregory the Great, and Sophronius of Jerusalem, heavily influenced by their own experiences as, or with, monks, patronized monasticism and composed monastic writings.[16] Indeed, the seminal, philosophically grounded theology of Gregory of Nazianzus was essential for formulating the understanding of how man approaches God through prayer, and also the very notion of *theosis* (deification), which influenced the mystical theology of Pseudo-Dionysius and Maximus the Confessor, as well as the late medieval spokesman for hesychasm or the practice of stillness (*hesychia*), Gregory Palamas (1296–1359) and modern Russian religious philosophy.[17]

To return to the main theme beyond the celebratory side of these names, the perspective on the church Fathers of future Rus' *literati* broadened somewhat as a result of the books introduced by Bulgarian teachers. These included two miscellany or *florilegia* and a *Hexameron*, that is, sermons on the first six days of Creation, to serve as an introduction to nature and the world as then understood according to Orthodox Christian doctrines. The miscellanies,

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[15] O. V. Loseva claims that the Slavic calendars adopted at least 38 celebrations, and maybe up to another 26, from Latin calendars. In addition, The *Ostromir Evangel* of 1056/7 and *Arkhangelsk Evangel* of 1092 have three celebratory dates consistent with Western calendars, not the Eastern. The *Mstislav Evangel* (ca. 1100) has two dates consistent with the West, and five other calendars, dated 1200s, ca. 1300, 1309–1312, mid-1300s, and early 15th century, have one each: Loseva, *Russkie mesiatseslovy*, 72–75, 122–126, 164, 165, 236, 245, 254, 256, 337, 355.

[16] Though never a monk, Athanasius of Alexandria closely associated himself with the ascetics of the Egyptian desert during his several periods of exile.

[17] See under θέωσις in Lampe, *Patristic Greek Dictionary*, 649–650; also Maximus Confessor, *Capita de charitate centuria*, 2.27–30, in PG, 90: cols. 922C–993B; *Philokalia*, 2:69–70; and Gregory Palamas, *Topics of Natural and Theological Science*,.

copies of which come down to us from 1073 and 1076, contain a variety of patristic excerpts, although even our hypothetical Bulgarian teacher could not have identified all of them. The *Hexameron,* at that time a recent Bulgarian compilation, was based chiefly on two previous works amplified by a bit of sanitized Aristotle.[18] Taken together, these three books contained a representative group of Fathers to whom the compositions were attributed, including ten of those prominent in the church calendars, but another 14 not so. From among the earliest Fathers are Justin Martyr (103–165) [in Russian *Iustin Filosof*], the founding Trinitarian, Irenaeus of Lyons (ca. 130–ca. 200),[19] and Hippolytus of Rome (d. ca. 230). From among the desert Fathers, the three works included the semi-legendary Moses of Scete, and from the generation of Emperor Constantine I and the First Ecumenical Council, the prolific church historian and exegete, Eusebius of Caesarea (ca. 260–ca. 340). We find from the fourth century with all of its controversy, the anti-Arian Athanasius of Alexandria, Severianus of Gabala (ca. 310–405),[20] and Epiphanius of Cyprus (or Salamis, ca. 315–402), as well as the three leading Cappadocians (Basil and the two Gregorys), and John Chrysostom. Of the Latin Fathers, the two florilegia and the *Hexameron* utilized Augustine of Hippo, and from among the writing monastics, they inserted two disciples of Chrysostom: Nilus of (Ancyra and Sinai) (ca. 370–430), and Isidore of Pelusium (d. 440). Cyril of Alexandria, Theodoret of Cyrrhus (ca. 386–post 457), Patriarch Gennadius I of Constantinople (418–471), and Hesychius of Jerusalem (d. ca. 433) represented the generations fighting Nestorianism and Monophysitism, and from the first two Byzantine centuries, properly speaking, Maximus the Confessor, Anastasius of Sinai, (pre-640–post-700), and John of Damascus appeared—the last two having lived under Islamic rulers. Accuracy of attribution, however, was sometimes honored in the

[18] For descriptions of the 1073 *Sbornik* (*Miscellany*) and *Hexameron* of Ioann the Bulgarian Exarch, see Gorskii and Nevostruev, *Opisanie slavianskikh rukopisei*, 2.1.2:1–29, No. 54, and 2.2.2: 365–405, No. 161. For a discussion and translation of the 1076 *Sbornik,* see *Edificatory Prose of Kievan Rus'*, xii–xl, 3–11.

[19] According to one tradition, a disciple of a disciple of a man who claimed to have known John the Evangelist, Irenaeus was partially responsible for elevating the Gospel of John, with its clear affirmation both of Christ's divinity as the incarnate Word and of the Trinity, to a par with the Synoptic Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

[20] Severianus and Basil composed the two *hexamera*, which were Ioann the Exarch's chief sources.

breach; for example, one citation attributed to John Chrysostom in the 1076 *Sbornik* (*Miscellany*) originated from John Climacus, and another, of unknown origin, was credited in the manuscripts to Maximus the Confessor as well as to Chrysostom.[21]

This list hardly does justice to the number of church Fathers whose works our Kiev bookmen would have read as their careers developed. While they could have known most of these Fathers through the excerpts of the 1073 miscellany, itself a redaction of the *Questions and Answers* of Anastasius of Sinai,[22] they also would have had access to a number of what then passed for single-authored books, albeit representing later collections of some of these authors' genuine and spurious works.

The survival of full compositions, of course, depended upon the labors and hence tastes of co-workers, disciples, and later writers, who chose to serve as literary executors. Judging from not only the extant codices, but also the language of the translations of later manuscripts, specialists have grounds to believe that the Rus' by the late 1000s or soon thereafter, had access to books by, attributed to, or compiled from the writings of, about a dozen Fathers, as well as saints' lives and the recent works of several Bulgarians. The available works of church Fathers included: collected sermons of Patriarch Cyril of Jerusalem, in addition to Athanasius of Alexandria, Gregory of Nazianzus and John Chrysostom;[23] a general theological treatise attributed to Caesarius (d. 368), brother of Gregory of Nazianzus, and an abbreviated *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* by John of Damascus;[24] and finally six moral-ascetic compilations: some version of the ancient *Patericon* of the desert Fathers,[25] the *Parenesis* (Exhortation) of Ephrem of Syria,[26] an *Asketikon* of homilies and regulations of

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[21] *Edificatory Prose of Kievan Rus'*, 6, 106.

[22] PG 89: cols. 311–823.

[23] Fomina, "Drevneishie spiski sbornika Zlatostrui," 34–53.

[24] The first full translation of his philosophical chapters came in the 14th c.: Sukhanova, "O pervonachal'noi redaktsii," 324–336.

[25] Van Wijk, "Podrobnyi obzor," 38–83; Van Wijk, "La traduction slave de l' *Ἀνδρῶν ἁγίων βίβλος*; Veder, "Le Skitskij Paterik," 51–72; *Old Church Slavonic Translation of Ἀνδρῶν ἁγίων βίβλος*; and *Drevnerusskie pateriki*.

[26] Ogren, *Parenesis Efrema Sirina*, argues that all of the Slavic translations hearken back to one made under the Bulgarian Tsar Symeon (r. 893–927) from a Greek text anterior to that published in the 1700s.

Basil of Caesarea,[27] the *Ladder* (*Lestvitsa*) of John Climacus of Sinai,[28] the *Pandects* of Antiochus Monachus of St. Sabas (early seventh century), and the *Little Catechisms* (Brief Sermons) of Theodore the Studite.[29]

The preceding list provides a clue to the restricted content of the original legacy of literature essentially about monasticism from the pre-Mongol period of Rus': the *Life of Feodosii*,[30] the *Paterik Pecherskii* (*Lives of the Fathers of the Cave Monastery*),[31] perhaps the brief sermons modeled on Theodore Studite and attributed to Feodosii,[32] Kirill of Turov's "Discourse" on the symbolic meaning of the monk's attire,[33] and a couple of other saints' lives.[34] Outside of Climacus's *Ladder*, none of the available treatises on monasticism expounded on its spiritual-mystical aspects; rather, they focused on the ethical, devotional, and ascetic, some of it extreme almost beyond belief.

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Let us fast-forward to 1516. For the overall flavor of the patristic environment of the time, we might slog through the detailed description of the *Great Menology* produced over the 1530s–1550s.[35] But for the purposes of this essay, we should place ourselves, say, in the Ferapontov Monastery in Beloozero, in the heart of Russia's northern forest wilderness, where a book-oriented novice would have access to some of pre-modern Russia's most creative spiritual

[27] Thomson, "Prolegomena," 65–84.

[28] On the translations, see Saenko, "K istorii slavianskogo perevoda teksta Lestvisty;" a great guide to understanding this work is Johnsén, *Reading John Climacus*.

[29] Tvorogov, "Drevnerusskie chet'i sborniki XII–XIV vekov," 20–41.

[30] Hollingsworth, *Hagiography of Kievan Rus'*, lviii–lxviii, 33–95, the chief literary models and sources being the "Life" of Anthony by Athanasius of Alexandria and the "Life" of Sabbas by Cyril of Scythopolis (active, 550s).

[31] Heppell, *Paterik of the Kievan Caves Monastery*.

[32] *SKKDR*, 1:457–459.

[33] Franklin, "On the Monastic Order," 82–96.

[34] I am skeptical that the "Life" of Avraamii of Smolensk as we know it stems from the pre-Mongol period. Other possibilities are the written lives of the Hungarian immigrant princely equerry and founder of the Novotorzhok Boris-and-Gleb Monastery, Efrem (d. 1053), and the princess/founder-abbess, Evfrosiniia of Polotsk (d. ca. 1173), plus the lost "Life" of Feodosii's mentor Antonii: *SKKDR*, 1:135–136, 146–150.

[35] Iosif, *Podrobnoe oglavlenie Velikikh chet'ikh minei*.

developments, artistic and literary,[36] as he progressed in his own reading, copying, and internalizing the monastic Fathers. Affecting him from among the crucial key factors for East Slavic monasticism since the Kievan period, would have been the translation and dissemination of five types of patristic literature: the ever-expanding and reworked hagiographic texts with a few Russian lives added to the mix; the regulatory and liturgical instructions, such as the Sabaite, or Jerusalem, Typikon as well as older and newer hymns;[37] the encyclopedic works, represented by the *Pandects* and *Taktikon* of Nikon of the Black Mountain;[38] dogmatic and apologetic treatises against Jews and "Latins" (Roman Catholics) as well as Arians and the like;[39] and ascetic-contemplative writings, including several new authorities.[40] Among the last-named figured Symeon the New Theologian (949–1032)[41] and his disciple Nicetas Stethatos (ca. 1000–1080); two personally obscure 12th-century writers, Peter Damaskenos[42] and Philipp Monotropos, (Solitarius), author of *Dioptra* (*Zertsalo* = Looking Glass);[43] and the 13th-century Nicephorus Monachus, or whoever it was, who authored the initial, brief Orthodox treatise of breath-control pray-

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[36] Danilova, *Freski Ferapontogo monastyria.*

[37] Taft, "Mount Athos"; and Prokhorov, "K istorii liturgicheskoi poezii."

[38] On Nikon, see Doens, "Nicon de la Montagne Noire," 131–140.

[39] Rev. John Meyendorff claimed that translations of the classical treatises on "pure theology" were rare items: *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*, 125; but, in fact, the translation of spiritual literature was also rather limited: for example, by no means were all of Maximus/Pseudo-Maximus the Confessor's or Peter Damaskenos's works accessible in a Slavic version.

[40] Diuchev, "Tsentry vizantiisko-slavianskogo obshcheniia," 107–129; and Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*, 119–144. For a nearly complete list of translations of the patristic literature, see Thomson, "The Corpus of Translations," 179–214. One item missing is the disputation of Gregentius the Himyarite and Rabbi Herbano: see below, page 104.

[41] For a dated description of a Slavic Symeon/Pseudo-Symeon, see Gorskii and Nevostruev, *Opisanie slavianskikh rukopisei* 1.2.1:434–444, No. 164.

[42] Gouillard, "Un auteur spirituel byzantine." The favorite sources of the 12th-century mystic Peter Damaskenos were Basil, Chrysostom, Climacus, the desert Fathers as a group, Gregory of Nazianzus, Isaac, John of Damascus, and Maximus, followed by Anthony, (Pseudo-)Dionyseus, Dorotheus, Evagrius, (Pseudo-)Macarius, and Nilus of Sinai, who, as a group, provide a balance among the original ascetics, the classical and philosophically informed theologians, and the hesychasts. For Damaskenos's writings, see *Philokalia* 3: 70–281.

[43] Prokhorov, *"Dioptra."* 7.

er,[44] as well as the two Gregorys to be discussed below. Simultaneously with these new writings, the eastern Rus' experienced the development and spread of revived hesychastic impulses, of partially or nearly fully cenobitic cloisters active in the growing productive, commercial, and commemorative-service economy, and perhaps, if Robert Romanchuk is correct, of a new critical and heuristic attitude toward texts and reading among a few daring minds.[45]

Nowadays, for overall orientation regarding the purely spiritual side of these three developments, we often turn to the brilliant and versatile exponent and defender of Orthodoxy as well as stillness, Gregory Palamas (1296–1359), but the most authoritative later medieval church Father for the Orthodox Slavic monk in his cell was the master practitioner, teacher, and hymnographer, Gregory the Sinaite (1265–1346).[46] One of his disciples, perhaps Romil of Vidin (Ravanica), composed or redacted the new "Scete Typikon,"[47] which Russians started to use around 1400, not only for

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[44] Hausherr, "La méthode d'oraison hesychaste, 150–208.

[45] For an introduction to this complex problem of hermeneutics, see Romanchuk, *Byzantine Hermeneutics*.

[46] A review of the Slavic manuscripts (here all miscellanies) of the Hilandar Monastery (a Serbian cloister on Mt. Athos), which are referenced here by the manuscript numbers used at the HRL, shows that Gregory the Sinaite is found in 17 of them, divided between spiritual writings and hymns. Works of Gregory Palamas appear only in seven: two contain anti-Catholic works (HM.SMS.469 and 474), and the remainder, sermons in honor of the Cross (HM.SMS.649), the Theotokos (HM.SMS.487 and 489), Clement (HM.SMS.441), and Demetreus (HM.SMS.440 and 487): Matejic and Thomas, *Catalog*, 1: 537–538, 559, 562; 2: 573–574. Similarly, the Iosif-Volokolamsk Monastery inventories of 1545, 1573, and 1591 contained the "Life" of Gregory the Sinaite and a book of Gregory Palamas against the Latins. The works attributed to Gregory the Sinaite preserved in Russia's State Historical Museum (GIM) collection of Iosifov manuscripts divide into hymns or instructions for repenting in five books of prayers (three of them Psalters), his "Life" in one codex, and some spiritual writings in four codices: KTs-*V*, 31, 33, 71–73, and the descriptions of GIM, Eparkhial'nyi Fond (hereafter, Eparkh.), Nos. 149, 156, 167, 277, 306, 345, 348, 351, 358, 368.

[47] Ivanova and Matejic, "An Unknown Work of St. Romil," 4: 3–15; and HRL, HM.SMS.640 (photocopy of microfilm generously supplied by HRL). The manuscript, from the 1370s to the 1380s, is defective, but ff. 2–9v (with folia missing between ff. 7v and 8) contain virtually the same text as in one of the earliest Russian copies, that is Kir.-Bel. XII ff. 258–266, 269–270v; see also Prokhorov, *Entsiklopediia*, 158–164. Romil was the author of

small establishments, but also as personal cell rules in large cenobia.[48] It stands in need of a major study,[49] as does Gregory the Sinaite's overall legacy in the world of Slavia Orthodoxa.[50]

Indeed, the nature and transmission of the Slavic versions of most major patristic figures require fresh investigations, though some serious new efforts have appeared.[51] In one example—the Slavic text of Symeon the New Theologian (949–1022)—the redactor created a practically-oriented, lead discourse, "O ezhe kako podobaet inokom prebyvati" (On How it is Proper for Monks to Live), from a later chapter of the original compilation and the instructions on repentance in an earlier section.[52] Symeon's

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this earliest of the Slavic copies (no Greek original has turned up), Balkan or Rus'/Russian, in a manuscript which also contains a selection of Gregory the Sinaite's works, but from a different hand. E. V. Beliakova believes that the "Scete Typikon" originated with one of Gregory's Slavic disciples: Beliakova, "Slavianskaia redaktsiia Skitskogo ustava," 3; see also Romanenko, *Nil Sorskii i traditsii russkogo monashestva*, 43.

[48] See Beliakova, "Ustav pustyni Nila Sorskogo," 96–106; and Prokhorov, *Entsiklopediia*, 351–352. The huge Egyptian monastic complex of Sketis (Scete) was the namesake for the term used to describe small communities of monks living separately, but joining periodically for communal services.

[49] See Prokhorov, *Entsiklopediia* 352; Romanenko, *Nil Sorskii*, 43; Beliakova's articles noted in the two previous footnotes represent an excellent start on the study of the "Scete Typikon."

[50] The Slavic tradition found in HRL, HM.SMS.640 (which also contains the "Scete Typikon") and, a little differently, in the Moscow Holy Synodal Collection (hereafter Sinod.), No.172: Gorskii and Nevostruev, *Opisanie Slavianskikh rukopisei,* 2.2:465–469, are close but not identical to what is printed in PG 150: cols. 1240–1346 and translated in the English version of the 18th-century Greek *Philokalia*: 4:207–286. These latter do not contain the hymns and instruction concerning penitence, ascribed to Gregory. See Hausherr, "L'origine de la théorie orientale." The miscellany HRL, HM.SMS .456 from the 1390s contains a similar, but not identical collection of Gregory's works. See also Tachaios, "Gregory Sinaites's Legacy"; and *NSAW*, 72–73.

[51] Among others, Granstrem, "Ioann Zlatoust" (1974), 186–193; Granstrem, "Ioann Zlatoust" (1980), 344–375; and Fedotova, "K voprosu o slavianskom perevode," 498–511.

[52] Cf. RNB, Solovki Collection, Fond 717, No. 271/793, ff. 1–23v (microfilm obtained for me in the late 1970s by Wayne Lord) and Symeon the New Theologian, *Catéchèses*, (a French translation of the Greek text) or *Discourses*, Discourses 5, 26. The latter is an English translation of the *Catéchèses.*

hymns, furthermore, are mixed in with the discourses in this Slavic version of *Simeon Novyi Bogoslov*.[53]

Slavs at Mt. Athos and in Russia also compiled their own anthologies of the major spiritual guides. One Hilandar codex from the 1390s contains the works of "Nilus of Sinai" (Evagrius of Pontus),[54] Maximus the Confessor, Philotheus of Sinai (post–700?),[55] Symeon the New Theologian, and Gregory the Sinaite. Another Hilandar codex from ca. 1400 has four of these ("Nilus," Maximus, Symeon, and Gregory), as well as Pseudo-Macarius of Egypt, Peter Damaskenos, Diadochus of Photice (400s), Ephrem of Syria, Isaac the Syrian (seventh century), Nicetas Stethatos, and the Latin developer of Evagrius's original formulation of the "eight (pernicious) urges" (thoughts, *logismoi*), John Cassian (ca. 360–ca. 435).[56] Likewise, an anthology compiled by the Iosif-Volokolamsk treasurer and external agent Tikhon Zvorykin in the very early 16th century contains ascetic works of Climacus, Abba Dorotheus (ca. 500–560/580), Basil, Barsonophius of Gaza (d. ca. 545), Peter Damaskenos Ephrem, Antiochus, (Pseudo-)Macarius, Diodochus, (Pseudo-)Nilus, Philotheus of Sinai, Nicetas Stethatos, Hesychius,[57] Maximus the Confessor, and others.[58] The core of these lists is identical to Gregory the Sinaite's recommendations.[59]

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[53] Gorskii and Nevostruev, *Opisanie Slavianskikh rukopisei* 2.1, 2, No. 164; see also, *NSAW*, 74–75. (An initial error regarding this text in *MRIV*, where "O ezhe kako podobaet" is treated simply as Pseudo-Symeon, was corrected in the revised edition.)

[54] See Hausherr, "L'origine de la théorie orientale," 164–175. From an April 2011 Dumbarton Oaks symposium on Evagrius and his legacy we can expect a superb new collective volume in the near future.

[55] The dates, even the precise centuries, of all three Sinai ascetics, John Climacus, Hesychius, and Philotheus are uncertain: The editors of the English *Philokalia* believe that Hesychius followed Climacus and preceded Philotheus: 1:161, 3:14.

[56] HRL, HM.SMS.456 and 468 (both miscellanies): Matejic and Thomas, *Catalog*, 1: 548, 558.

[57] That is Hesychius of the Batos Monastery on Mt. Sinai (post–650?), whose spiritual *Centuries* are attributed by tradition to Hesychius of Jerusalem.

[58] KTs-*V*, 358–360 (GIM, Eparkh., No. 344); see Goldfrank, "Nil Sorskii's Following," 215–216.

[59] "Read deeply always about stillness (*hesychia*) and prayer, such as in *The Ladder* or in Isaac, that of Maximus, that of the New Theologian, that of his disciple Stethatos, that of Hesychius, that of Philotheus, and those

Gelian Prokhorov has shown that the greatest amount of Russian copying of the major works of the above authors, according to the extant Troitse-Sergiev Monastery collection, occurred around 1380–1425, with a lesser peak coming around 1480–1515, and a third soon after the Time of Troubles (1620s–1630s): information consistent with what we know, adjusting, of course, for the foundation dates, of the Kirillov (1397) and Iosifov (1479) Monasteries.[60] Thus, the hesychastic revival typified by Gregory the Sinaite's Balkan activities, more than any organic development out of the Kievan period, set the stage for the spiritual side of Russia's next era of monastic creativity, grounded in patristics.

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Two clusters of events during Troitse-Sergiev's second peak of interest in ascetic cell literature set off a flurry of parallel and mutually reinforcing Russian monastic reforms, which claimed grounding in patristic traditions and certainly would have affected our hypothetical Ferapontov novice. At some time in the 1470s or soon thereafter, Nil Maikov returned from Mt. Athos to Kirillov Monastery and established his own skete or hermitage by the Sora River (1470s–1480s—and hence, "Nil Sorskii") as the focal point for teaching the stillness à la Gregory the Sinaite. In 1477 Iosif Sanin succeeded his late mentor as abbot at Pafnutii-Borovsk. However, facing certain difficulties with the Moscow authorities, he paid a semi-incognito[61] visit to Kirillov and a few other cloisters before returning to Pafnutiev and then moving to his native Volokolamsk to start his own cenobium in 1479 (from which he gets the sobriquet "of Volokolamsk" or "Volotskii"). Each claimed full grounding in the monastic Fathers. Parallel to this, the development of dissident thinking by so-called then "Jewish-reasoning Novgorod heretics," which is not at all the subject of this essay, placed the authority of church Fathers, along with reason and rhetoric, at the center of the defense of tradition.

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of such others": *De quietudine et duobis orationis modis capita quindecem* 14, PG 150: col. 1324D; cf. Maloney, *Russian Hesychasm*, 108.

[60] Prokhorov, "Keleinaia isikhastskaia literatura," 317–324; and Fedotova, "K voprosu o slavianskom perevode," 501, 504.

[61] Intelligent, vigorous, charismatic, and possessed of one of the best singing voices in the land, Iosif was hardly better at concealing his identity in 1478 than Peter the Great was in 1698.

Were the two monastic reform impulses connected? Two circumstances indicate that they were. It cannot be an accident that Nil Sorskii's "On Mental Activity" (*O myslenom delanii*—his treatise or so-called *Ustav*), Iosif's initial, brief rule ("Discourses from the Divine Writings of Abba Iosif to His Disciples on the Cenobitic Life"), his initial brief redaction *Prosvetitel'* (originally termed his "Discourses and Introduction against the Godless Heretics"), and even Iosif's first expansion toward his extended rule (*Dukhovnaia gramota* [Spiritual Writ = Last Will and Testament]) all contain 11 *slova* (*slovesa*) or "discourses" (singular—*slovo*). And it cannot be an accident that the earliest extant copies of both Nil's and Iosif's major works are from the combined hands of Nil Sorskii and his shared disciple with Iosif, the latter's future council elder, Nil Polev.[62]

Nil Sorskii's pedagogical and psychological mission was both easier and harder than Iosif's. It was simpler, since both the skete as a mode of life and Nil's goal of teaching and spreading stillness (*hesychia, bezmolvie*) were solidly anchored in received traditions. He mastered this legacy and was a superb writer. Yet this work was more difficult, because the life Nil preached and taught was extraordinarily demanding and outside the mainstream of monastic activity of the late 14th and early 15th centuries. It was one thing for a cloister's literate contingent or a solitary to include some reading of spiritual literature and experimenting up to one's capacity in hesychastic devotions, in addition to following the normal ascetic rigors of the cell rule. It was another to devote one's training and adult life to such "prayer of the heart." To be a genuine follower of Nil, one had to study the monastic Fathers, and go through a long period of discipleship that emphasized practice in obedience, humility, labor, and abstinence, and aim for self-purification from all tempting urges and thoughts. Theoretically, due to the actions of Satan and his army of demons, even the most accomplished monks had to be vigilant and ready for combat. Once a monk achieved an appropriate level of discipline, there followed the requirement of rigorously exercising one's body and mind in directed, pure prayer.

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[62] Kloss, "Nil Sorskii i Nil Polev," 150–167; Prokhorov, "Poslaniia Nila Sorskogo," 125–143; Prokhorov, "Avtografy Nila Sorskogo," 37–54; Prokhorov, "Nil Sorskii," 2.1: 133–141. N. A. Kazakova, however, suggested earlier that a fragmentary copy of Nil's *Ustav* by his Kirillov disciple Gurii Tushin is the oldest copy: Kazakova, "Knigopisnaia deiatel'nost'," 175, 179–180. In general on Nil and Iosif as allies, see Goldfrank, "Re-centering Nil Sorsky."

Iosif's tasks were of a different order. The problem for him, in relationship to the church Fathers, was monastic worldly success in his abbey's first 25 or 30 years such as no countryman before him had enjoyed, except perhaps, Feodosii of the Kievan Cave Monastery (11th century) at the dawn of Rus' monasticism. No one else had collected such dedicated talent so quickly as Iosif. No one else had so rapidly expanded the economic base of a cloister as did this rationalizer and systematizer of commemorative services. No one else had so earnestly patronized the best iconographer of his day or built up a fine library so quickly and so well. No one else had been able to influence church policies or to sprinkle the church leadership with allies and disciples as he did.[63] Certainly, models existed of flourishing cenobia, past and present, in theory or in practice, such as Stoudion in Constantinople, the Laura at Mt. Athos, and Troitse-Sergiev and Kirillo-Belozersk Monasteries at home. But to collect a brotherhood from all walks of life, teach, preach, legislate for it, and meanwhile orchestrate a canonically questionable inquisition, while growing rich and powerful, and be able to package the entirety consistently within the patristic ascetic traditions—this required a special turn of mind bordering on pure chutzpah in the eyes of some contemporaries who perceived in his actions a hypocritical hijacking of the hierarchy.[64]

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[63] Zimin, *Krupnaia feodal'naia votchina*, 37–100; Steindorff, *Memoria in Altrussland*, 164–196, passim.

[64] "And you, Sir, have humiliated not only commoners, but your lord prince, and boyars, and state secretaries, and have removed an archbishop from his throne .... And you, Sir, have established your own law and have laid your displeasure on everybody .... And from whom, Sir, have you studied the art of war? ... Why, Sir, do you call yourself a poor man [*nishch*]? Have you not dressed yourself in sheepskin only in form, while internally being full of ravishing and injustice? Are you so poor, Sir, that not only laymen, but also princes are seduced by your riches? ... And why do you think and say to yourself, 'Such a great abbey—how can it be provisioned, if people do not give?' ... And you, Sir, by your typikon, would kill and burn all sinners." So wrote one of Iosif's critics at the end of Iosif's life or soon afterwards, *PIV*, 345, 348, 352, 354, 358 [all translations of Iosif and Nil in the text and in the notes by DG]. The questions of Iosif's documented intrigues and what underlay his determined fanaticism against dissidence also lie beyond the purview of this essay.

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We shall commence with Nil because of his more constrained interests and because if either one was in any way the teacher of the other, Nil likely played that role. Of course, for our imagined Ferapontov novice, both Nil and Iosif would have seemed larger than life, given their mastery and application of the monastic Fathers.

Specialists accustomed to thinking "non-Iosif" when they imagine Nil Sorskii, emphasize his undeniable closeness to the spiritual Fathers of the Christian East.[65] But this is only part of the story. If we examine Nil's book-copying, which included liturgical hymns, we find him to be in the mainstream within the church,[66] and this explains how our Ferapontov monk would have encountered Nil. His collection of 24 edited lives from the first millennium monastic saints points in all possible ascetic directions: recluses and stylites, laura-archs and cenobiarchs, tyrant-bashers and first-rate intellects.[67] All of these miracle workers came from fine families, were educated, practiced strict asceticism, and routed evil. Accordingly, they all also combated heresy or Satan, often as wonder-working faith healers. Stillness was secondary, especially compared to what it might have been. For example, Nil bypassed Gregory Palamas's hesychasticizing revision of the original "Life" of Peter of Athos (earlier ninth century) by Nicholas the Monk, which has a standard, tropic minimum of *hesychia* as part of one's life experience, even though Palamas's version discusses the nature of prayer.[68] Nicholas's original decried acquisitiveness in a fashion that appears to foreshadow Nil's original writings.[69]

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[65] For example, Lilienfeld, *Nil Sorskij*.

[66] Kloss, "Nil Sorskii i Nil Polev"; and Prokhorov, "Avtografy Nila Sorskogo."

[67] For a brief descriptive analysis, see *NSAW*, 24–30.

[68] *Sobornik Nila Sorskogo*, 1:227–268; Lake, *Early Days of Monasticism*, 18–39; Gregorius, Archbishop of Thessalaonika, *Oratio in admirabilem et angelicae parem vitam sancti ac divini patris nostri Petri qui in Sancto Monte Atho anchoretam egit*, PG 150: cols. 996–1050; and Papacherysianthou, "La vie ancienne de Saint Pierre l'Athonite," 19–23.

[69] Cf. Lake, *Early Days of Monasticism*, 35, 39; *Sobornik Nila Sorskogo*, 257, 267; and *NSAW*, 186–187, 215. An intriguing question is whether Nil was the first to translate Nicholas's genitive plural *kai agrōn kai ktēmatōn* ("both fields and property/possessions") as *i sel i stiazhanii* ("both villages/fields and property/possessions"), a problem created by the ambiguity of the Russian *selo*, which could translate *agrōs* ("field"), as well as words

Nil's hagiography, it turns out, while honored by Iosifov monks, did not find favor with the Iosifite-leaning hierarch Makarii, who, as archbishop of Novgorod 1526–1542 and metropolitan of Moscow 1542–1563), commissioned and expanded the *Great Menology*. Tamara Lönngren suggests that Nil's offense may have been his tampering with the older texts, even if he did not sacrifice content when he streamlined to improve the form—something she shows to have been the case in comparing versions of the "Life" of Symeon the Stylite of the Wondrous Mountain (521–596).[70] Here, we should note, Nil was doing what he also did with sources in his original monastic writings, and Iosif sometimes tampered with texts as well.[71]

A fine example of Nil's textual manipulation is his *Predanie* (*Tradition*), a brief rule for his small community, wherein he altered the quite disjointed introduction to the *Taktikon* of Nikon of the Black Mountain (ca. 1025–1088), including the confession of faith, and created some excellent prose as he recast it as a transition to a discussion of the skete life as superior to the cenobium.[72] Nil seems to have composed the *Predanie* to complement the "Scete Typikon" and its instructions for devotions in the cell and the weekly group service. How much Nil and his disciples joined these two works is impossible to say, but a version of the "Scete Typikon" accompanies some copies of the *Predanie* and "On Mental Activity"—those associated with his full or shared disciples Gurii Tushin, Nil Polev, and Dionisii Zvenigorodskii. An amended and redacted copy from Nil Sorskii's pen commences Nil Polev's copy of the Sorskii codex.[73] The titles themselves appear com-

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indicating village, manor, or settlement: Sreznevskii, *Materialy* 1: 326–329. Nil certainly did not wish his hermitage to own any plough land, as his *Predanie* forbids outdoor labor in fields: *NSAW*, 118.

[70] Lönngren, "Nil Sorskii i ego 'Sobornik.'" My own comparison of Nil's version of Symeon's "Life" to the published English translation of one of the standard Greek versions does not indicate that Nil represented this column-dweller as a hesychast in any fashion.

[71] Maybe the best example for Iosif is his homily constructed out of Chrysostom's strictures on praying in church: *AfED*, 341–356; *Prosvetitel'*, 7:204–218; and *MRIV*, "The Brief Rule," "Discourse I[B]," pp. 18–25, 125–129; "The Extended Rule," "Discourse I," pp. 13–21, 172–176, the last named with Chrysostom's texts precisely identified as Iosif uses them.

[72] See Goldfrank, "Nil Sorskii and Nikon," 370–397.

[73] Eparkh. 349 (Nil Polev's) and Eparkh. 351 (Dionisii's): KTs-*V*, 364–366. Also RNB, OR, Kir.-Bel. No. 25 from the mid-16th century, which would

plementary, one being "*Predanie ustavom prebyvaiushchim inokom skitskago zhitiia*" (The Tradition for the Typikon for Monks Who Live the Scete Life),[74] the other, in one early version, *O zhitel'stve sviatykh otets', sie predanie startsa Nila pustinnika uchenikom svoim* (On the Life of the Holy Fathers: This is the Tradition {i.e., Instruction} of the Elder Nil the Hermit to His Disciples).[75] Like the "Scete Typikon," the convoys of Nil's *Predanie* and "On Mental Activity" await a thorough new study.[76]

Nil's skill as a writer shines forth in "On Mental Activity," where he selects or combines the voice of his favorite spiritual Fathers and lets them speak for themselves, while he employs their words to depict a problem or make a recommendation in his own way.[77] His presentation and adaptation in "Slovo 2" of Gregory the Sinaite's strictures on steadfastness illustrate this streamlining, recombining, and conscious choice of alternative words—something that has eluded other translators, who, in my opinion, have not sufficiently utilized Nil's patristic base here:

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seem to stem from Gurii's influence over Nil's legacy in Kirilov, and which Borovkova-Maikova considered to contain the purest text for her 1912 publication: *NSPU*, 124–135. Cf. Beliakova, "Ustav pustyni Nila Sorskogo," 106. The special addition to the *Predanie* in Nil Sorskii's hand concerns necessary items for a church and self-administration of sacraments when no priest is present, the latter with a discussion attributed to Basil of Caesarea: GIM, Eparkh. 349, ff. 15–16v (HRL microfilm).

[74] Prokhorov, *Entsiklopediia*, 158: alternative translation for *predanie:* instruction: see below, note 154 and the text to it.

[75] *NSPU*, 1; but possibly the earliest copy has the shorter title: *O zhitel'stve ot sviatykh pisanii*: Prokhorov, *Nil Sorskii*, 82.

[76] *The Testament* (*Zavet*) of Nil's disciple/travel companion to Athos, Innokentii Okhliabinin (d. 1491), indicates his use of some earlier versions of Nil's *Predanie* and "On Mental Activity." Published from 16th-century Kirillo-Belozersk collection manuscripts (See Prokhorov, *Nil Sorskii*, 319), the text shows that it was originally written down in a codex containing Nil's *Predanie* or *Pisanie* (Writing) before the *Zavet* and his *slovesi* (discourses) afterward—both of which works Innokentii considered authoritative for his community. The *Zavet*, however, also contains stipulations found in Nil's *Predanie*, as if appended to the an earlier recension of it: Cf. Innokentii's "*A iunykh i bezbradnykh inokov ... pian'stvennago zhe pitiia otniud' ne podobaet derzhati nam*," ibid., 320, and Nil's "*V pian'stvo zhe piti otnud' ne podobaet nam ... i s''khraniti vsiachesky gladkykh zhenovidnykh'' lits*": Arkhangel'skii, *Nil Sorskii i Vassian Patrikeev*, *Prilozhenie* III, 14–16; *NSPU*, 9; Prokhorov, *Nil Sorskii*, 90; and *NSAW* (with a translation of the *Zavet*), 122–123, 273–276.

[77] For more on this subject, see Goldfrank, "Literary Nil," and *NSAW*, 83–86.

> And therefore it is proper to endure in prayer, turning away as much as possible from all thoughts, and not rise to chant too early. *In endurance*, he says, *may your sitting be, as it is said, "enduring in prayer,"*[78] *and do not rise quickly due to painful debility or intellectual cries of the mind.*[79] And he cites the word of *the Prophet*: *"ill-afflicted like those in pain and about to give birth,"*[80] and *what St. Ephrem said: "Suffer pains of pains painfully, and thereby bypass the pains of vain pains."*[81] *And he directs to bow with shoulders and head in pain and endure oft times with desire, summoning the Lord Jesus for help, bending downward* and *gathering the mind within the heart, if indeed it is open,*[82] he says. And he cites the *word of the Lord himself: "Violent,"* he said, *"is the kingdom of heaven, and the violent ravage it."*[83] *Violence*,[84] *the Lord showed to be zeal and pain over these*,[85] he *says*.[86]

Gregory's two texts present perfectly logical expositions, using the imagery of Mt 11:12 and the monastic interpretation of its "violence,"[87] which Nil compacted and essentialized without

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[78] Acts 1:14 (referring to Mary and the disciples at Jesus's tomb).

[79] Nil omits Gregory's "*and perpetual strife*."

[80] Mi 4:9 the italic text to here from *Quomodo oportaet sedere hesychastam ad orationem nec cito assurgere* (hereafter *Quomodo oportaet*), PG 150: col. 1329A.

[81] The segment is from *De quietudine et duobis modis orationis* (hereafter *De quietudine*) 14, PG 150: cols. 1328BC; the alleged, so far unidentified, citation from Ephrem (in Greek—and I wonder if from the original Syriac as well) is a *pleonastic polypteron* (a heaping of words of the same root), here on the *pon-* root, carried over into Slavic with the *bol-* root, *pain* here being used archaically as a verb as well as noun: *boli bolezn bolezneno, iako mimo techenii suetnykh boleznei bolezni.*

[82] This segment is from *Quomodo oportaet,* PG 150: col. 1329A.

[83] Matt. 11:12.

[84] This segment is from *De quietudine*, PG 150: col. 1328A.

[85] This segment is from *Quomodo oportaet,* PG 150: col. 1329A.

[86] "Says" is adapted from *De quietudine*, PG 150: col. 1328A. The passage in its entirety is found in *NSPU*, 24, and Prokhorov, *Nil Sorskii*, 112–15, with a modern Russian translation. Gregory's words appear in italics. The translation remains faithful to the order of Nil's borrowing from *Quomodo oportaet* and *De quietudine*. See also, *NSAW*, 141–142.

[87] Cf. Climacus *Ladder* 1.8 and *Scholia*, 12, PG 88: col. 636B, col. 648B. John Chrysostom gave a more general spiritual interpretation, which neither excludes nor requires an ascetic interpretation: accordingly, Jesus meant: "take by force the faith that is in me": *In Mattheum homilia* 37, PG 57: cols; 422–425. For some of the difficulties modern biblical scholars

losing meaning. To employ a metaphor from the gaming table, it is almost as if Nil rearranged some of the best cards in the deck to produce another strong hand, using one of Gregory's texts to clarify another.[88] The very structure of Nil's "On Mental Activity" shows him balancing systematic logic and discursive art in presenting his subject. On the one hand, he abstracted the system embedded in previous treatises that were somewhat disjointed in structure—something one can observe in the greatest of the (so appearing) single-authored patristic sources available to him, such as Ephrem's *Parenesis,* Climacus's *Ladder* and Isaac the Syrian. This observation is no criticism of these Fathers from an outsider, since for the devout, virtually any passage from these works can place the practitioner somewhere on his or her own path of divine ascent.[89] On the other hand, perhaps as Nil understood the rhetorical strategies of his sources, by his very structure he seems to have been in dialogue with himself. His "Introduction" commences with the spiritual goal of acquiring inner purity and then knowledge of God, and next moves to the nature of the struggle against pernicious urges ("Slovo 1"), only to return to a mini-treatise on the goal ("Slovo 2"), back to the struggle ("Slovo 3" to "Slovo 6"), with a sectioned mini-treatise on the eight standard urges (*pomysl'*)[90] in "Slovo 5," which informed readers would recognize as the middle ground between the longer such treatment in the Slavic John Cassian (unnamed by Nil) and much briefer one attributed to "Nilus of Sinai."[91] Next comes a transition to the positive concerning remembrance of death ("Slovo 7"), then the means of advancing toward the goal via tearfulness, watchfulness, and impassibility ("Slovo 8" to "Slovo 10"), and finally a return to basics, with a warning on proper timing ("Slovo 11").

face with this verse and the related Lk 16:16, see *Anchor Bible*, Matthew, 137–139.

[88] Arkhangel'skii notes that when Nil cited a translation, he often felt the need to explain meaning: *Nil Sorskii i Vassian Patrikeev*, 181n44.

[89] "Forsake not Isaac. Every day one page of Abba Isaac. No more. Isaac is the mirror. There you will behold yourself...One page of Isaac a day. In the morning or at night, whenever. Suffice it that you read a page": attributed to Elder Ieronymos "the Clairvoyant" of Aegina, on the dedication page of *Ascetical Homilies of Saint Isaac the Syrian*.

[90] I explain my preference *urge* over *thought* for *pomysl'* = *logismos* in *NSAW*, 88.

[91] See *NSAW*, 70–71, 162–188. Sans recourse to my earlier work, Elena Romanenko confirmed the problem of locating the source of all of Nil's borrowings from John Cassian: "Sviatootecheskie istochniki ... Nila, 54–58.

Nil was certainly careful in selecting his sources to suit his purposes.[92] The explicit centrality of Gregory the Sinaite in "Slovo 2" on hesychastic prayer leaves no doubt that Nil is renovating Gregory's mission. Thus the utilization of Gregory as a key source on the hesychast's ultimate vision is logical. John Climacus's crystallization of the theory of the progression of a spiritual battle in the *Ladder* served as Nil's basic source for this phenomenon, but he employed the correctives found in Climacus's successors.[93] Nil's literary trick here was to rearrange Climacus's written structure as if a mathematician were recasting a matrix to amplify a formula by converting a predicate into a subject heading.[94] Climacus was also crucial for Nil's treatment of the fight against lust: the battle that Climacus himself used in developing his general theory of spiritual combat. He was, moreover, central for Nil's handling of compunction/mourning/repentance under the heading "Tears,"[95] and of the question of detachment, as well as for Nil's discussion of timing—thus qualifying Climacus as Nil's single most used Father. Perhaps the device of commencing with the most recent master-hesychast, Gregory the Sinaite, and ending with the most authoritative and popular classical ascetic-mystic, John Climacus, was Nil's means of foregrounding Gregory's spiritual agenda for Russian monks and their individual spiritual sojourns.

Specialists in stillness have seen compunction/mourning/repentance as a *sine qua non*, the penultimate prerequisite for the hesychast's successful mental praxis or "prayer of the heart."[96] Nil apparently fully agreed, and accordingly relied on Isaac the Syrian,

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[92] On this, see Arkhangel'skii, *Nil Sorskii i Vassian Patrikeev*, 139–184, as well as *NSAW,* 68–80 and the footnotes to the translations. For such identifications of Nil's sources, von Lilienfeld (*Nil Sorskij*) did some excellent spade work with Greek texts, which were augmented by Grolimund, *Neilou Sorsku*, and even more so by this author's use of the Slavic HRL microfilms, manuscripts located in Russia, or publications (*NSAW*). For why one ought avoid purported "translations" of Nil, other than these three or Prokhorov's (*Nil Sorskii*), see *NSAW*, xi, 105–109.

[93] See the citations in Lilienfeld, *Nil Sorskij,* 208, and the fuller analysis of this problem in Maloney, *Russian Hesychasm*, 181–182.

[94] See Goldfrank, "Nil Sorskii and Nikon," 397–400.

[95] Modern analysts of Orthodox spirituality pull these notions together under the rubric of *penthos*, whose core meaning, following Climacus, is *mourning*, but it must be *gladdening* (*charapoios*), not debilitating: Hausherr, *Penthos,* 7; Cf. *Ladder* 7.1, PG 88: col. 801CD.

[96] Hausherr, *Penthos.*

seen now by some as the most brilliant and sublime of the theorists,[97] and Symeon the New Theologian, Middle Byzantium's poet of mysticism, to complement Climacus on tears and Gregory the Sinaite on the ultimate vision.

Nil's choice of church Fathers for brief commentary on the battle against pernicious thoughts, such as Gregory the Sinaite against pride, Isaac the Syrian against sadness, or Dorotheus of Gaza against anger, appear arbitrary. But the same cannot be said of Nil's reliance on Basil of Caesarea for fighting gluttony, for here "On Mental Activity" introduces some practical directives, and to underscore the common principles of abstinence for both cenobites and skete elders made perfect sense. Of course, simply to teach basic principles Nil did not need to use all of these patristic authors, much less others. But he cited more—not only a further set of other monastic and semi-monastic Fathers, including alleged "hesychast" desert Fathers such as Anthony and Daniel of Scete, but also Ephrem, Barsonophius, Pope Gregory of Rome, Philotheus of Sinai, Theodore the Studite, Peter Damaskenos, Diodochus of Photice, (Pseudo-)Macarius, Maximus the Confessor, and Nicetas Stethatos. Nil even cited generalists and hymnographers, such as Patriarch Germanus of Constantinople, Andrew of Crete, and John of Damascus. This collectivity certainly promoted the notion of Nil's focus as mainstream monasticism, just as we shall argue for Iosif, leaving our Ferapontov novice with complementary guides for his life in the cloister.

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Iosif's broader sweep allows us to expand our grasp of how late medieval Russia appropriated the church Fathers. In the sources, Iosif first appears around 1476–1477 as a "disciple" summoned to expound on problems relating to the Trinity and the Old Testament. His initial principle was fidelity to the credo of his baptismal vows, the foundation of all Christian life, and, by extension, of

[97] "If...the writings of Abba Isaac the Syrian alone survived, they would suffice to one from beginning to end concerning the life of stillness and prayer. They are the Alpha and Omega of the life of watchfulness and interior prayer, and alone suffice to guide one from his first steps to perfection," attributed to Joseph the Hesychast of Mt. Athos on the dedication page of *The Ascetical Homilies of Saint Isaac the Syrian.*

monasticism.[98] As the campaign against accused dissidence developed Iosif produced apologetics, influenced in form and a good deal of content by what he would have considered the word and example of the Fathers, and radiating a monastic hue. Aided, it seems, by co-workers and disciples, he would later combine a semi-historical introduction (*skazanie,* meaning "disquisition," "explanation," or "account"), 11 discourses (ten called *slovo*, the seventh also an extended *skazanie*), and some combination of epistles and discourses into several redactions of his extended *Prosvetitel'* called, among other things in the sixteenth century, *Book Against the Novgorod Heretics*. This became Iosif's most popular work by far, and was the only comprehensive, dogmatic-practical, theological compilation authored in pre-modern Russia to be widely read.[99] As for his dependence upon church Fathers, the very notion of a *"slovo* against the recently arising heresy" seems modeled on Cosmas the Presbyter's diatribe against the Bulgarian Bogomils (ca. 950–1000).[100] The cluster of three *slova*

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[98] *PIV*, 139. Pliguzov, "O khronologii poslanii," 1046–1047, concurs with Lur'e's dating, but A. I. Alekseev has of late challenged it: *Sochineniia Iosifa*, 235–242.

[99] For our purposes here, to consider *Prosvetitel'* as a continuously utilized work in the making, with its parts and various combinations of them developing from the late 1480s to beyond Iosif's death for several decades, makes the most sense. A. P. Pliguzov has challenged, unconvincingly, in my opinion, Lur'e's basic conclusions concerning the earliest recensions of the "Brief" and "Extended" versions: *AfED*, 438–466; Lur'e, *Ideologicheskaia bor'ba*, 95–127; Lur'e, "Kogda byla napisana 'Kniga na novgorodskikh eretikov'?," 78–88; Pliguzov, "Kniga," 90–139; and Pliguzov, "O khronologii poslanii," 1043–1061. However much others may have collaborated or even composed some individual parts, both redactions of *Prosvetitel'* were issued in Iosif's name and, according to Lur'e's analysis of the texts and paper, prepared in his lifetime. Recently, A. I. Alekseev has claimed, in opposition to Lur'e, that the whole slew of Iosif's epistles, which Lur'e and others thought underlay *Prosvetitel',* were derivative and composed later: *Sochineniia Iosifa,* 204–320, 345. I make a preliminary discussion of this issue in Goldfrank, "New on the Piety of Yore" and a more detailed one in Goldfrank, "Anatomy." For a fresh reversion to an older view of an early date for the first recension, see Miyano, "K voprosu."

[100] *AfED*, 466, 475. Cosmas's diatribe was also one of the works that Gennadii wished the Orthodox to have, "because the heretics possess them all," and he characterized it as "Slovo Kozmy prozvitera na novoiavl'shuiusia eres' na Bogomiliu" (Discourse of Cosmas the Presbyter against the Newly Arising Heresy, against Bogomil): *AfED*, 320. The term "newly arising" (or "newly appearing" or "recent") occurs in the introducto-

in defense of icons hearkens back to John of Damascus, the chief patristic source for two of these discourses.[101] Grouping together four *slova* in defense of Orthodox trinitarianism and against Judaism recalls the four-part dispute of Bishop Gregentius the Himyarite (early 500s) against Rabbi Herbano, translated on commission into Russian at Mt. Athos in 1423,[102] and other such packets of four as Athanasius of Alexandria's discourses against the Arians.[103] Among other writers translated from Greek in later Middle Ages and used by Iosif for theology (if not much) are Pseudo-Dionysius with commentaries by Maximus the Confessor[104] and Philipp Monotropos.

In his "Introduction," Iosif claimed to imitate both Antiochus Monachus and Nikon of the Black Mountain in responding to danger with a multi-discourse work intended to buttress Orthodoxy.[105] Iosif saw his fight against dissidence first and foremost as a monastic and quasi-monastic endeavor: "The monastic order, those in monasteries and those in hermitages, and also many noble and Christ-loving laymen girded their hearts, their souls

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ry *Skazanie* and "Slovo 1" of Iosif's *Prosvetitel'*. On Cosmas, see Thomson, "Cosmas of Bulgaria," 262–269. Gennadii himself may be responsible for the word *slovo*, since the title in the manuscripts starts with *Beseda* (Conversation: alternative translation: Discourse): Begunov, *Kozma Presviter*, 297.

[101] John of Damascus, *Orationes apoligeticae contra eos qui sacri imagines abjiciunt*, PG 94: cols. 1227–1420; *On the Divine Images*; *AfED*, 323–390 (*Prosvetitel'*, *Slova* 6–7, 5).

[102] *VMCh*, vol. 12 (Dec. 19), cols. 1107–1431;. PG 86: cols. 682–784, especially 765B; Berger, *Life and Works of Saint Gregentios*, 450–803 (original Greek and English translation); *Prosvetitel'*, 1–4: 55–169, and especially 4:139; and Golubinskii, *Istoriia Russkoi tserkvi*, 2.2:268.

[103] Gorskii and Nevostruev, *Opisanie*, II.1.2:32–41; and Sinod., No. 111/20. Cf. PG 26: cols. 12–525; and *Discours contre les Ariens.*

[104] Gorskii and Nevostruev, *Opisanie*, II.1.2:1, Sinod., No. 107; Prokhorov, "Poslanie Titu-lerararkhu," 15, claiming Metropolitan Kiprian (r. in eastern Rus', 1381–1382, 1390–1408) as transmitter.

[105] *AfED*, 474 (*Prosvetitel'*, *Skazanie*, 47). Later, in "Slovo 15," Iosif likens his enumeration of the foulest of the alleged heretical deeds to the works of the bishops Cyril of Jerusalem, Methodius of Patara, and John of Nicea (active ca. 900) against, respectively, the Manicheans, Origenists, and Armenians: *Prosvetitel'*, 15:521. Cf. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catacheses* 6.30–36, PG 33: cols. 584C–609A; Methodius Episcopus et Martyris, *Ex Libro de resurrectione excerpta* and *Ex Libro de creatis excerpta*, PG 18: cols. 266–344; Joannes Niceanis Archepiscopus, *De nativitate Domini*, PG 96: cols. 1433–1449.

having many afflictions and complete sorrow...." Iosif then generalized the ascetic literature's sense of permanent struggle against Satan and his troop of demons: "Now not the Persians, nor the Turks, but the Devil himself with his army has mobilized against the Church of Christ."[106] His epistolary appeals to action evoked the ancient martyrs and the heroic models of hagiography and sacred history:

> In truth...you will obtain the heavenly kingdom from our Lord Jesus Christ with the first confessors and bishops, Germanus, Nicephorus, and Methodius.[107] ... If we do not die now for truth and piety, then we shall soon die for nothing. ... Remember ... the God-bearing fathers and teachers, patriarchs, confessors, who struggled bloodily over piety. Look and see their glory and fineness now. They rested in peace, their tombs give off incense, their relics bloom, like a fragrant flower, the Lord reigns in them, and their souls are in the hands of the Lord.[108]

Affirming in *Prosvetitel',* "Slovo 4" the continuing salvific effects of saints and relics—"and they still save"[109]—Iosif gave an essentially monasticizing commentary to a claim, attributed to Chrysostom, that Christ's victory over Satan provided the right path for salvation, which entailed:

> not only suffering of torments and the ascetic life, but also being afflicted over sins, pounding of the forehead, beating of the breast, bending of the knees, raising up of the hands, suffering of the heart, and lamentation of the heart over sins, that is, sighs from the depth of the heart, mournful lamentation, teardrops, a conscience with suffering that cries and vocal fruit confessing the name of the Lord Jesus, and lips saying after David, "I have transgressed unto my Lord and done evil before Him."[110]

Not surprisingly, Iosif's defense of monasticism and monastic garb in the four-part "Slovo 11" of *Prosvetitel'* draws heavily on sacred history, hagiography, and patristics, in this case going back to (Pseudo-) Clement and (Pseudo-) Dionysius the Areopagite.

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[106] AfED, 474 (*Prosvetitel', Skazanie*, 45, 47).

[107] All three were patriarchs of Constantinople (715–730, 806–815, 842–846 respectively), and all three resisted iconoclasm and the emperors who supported it: *LER* 1: 418–420, 434–435, 447, 450–451.

[108] *AfED*, 425; and *PIV*, 161–162.

[109] *Prosvetitel'*, 4:159.

[110] *Prosvetitel'*, 4:161–162; cf. Ps 50:5/51:4.

From among about 70 named authorities and examples reaching back to the Old Testament, Iosif notes that such greatly revered bishops as Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, John Chrysostom, Athanasius of Alexandria, and Nicholas of Myra had all been monks,[111] and that the liturgies of Basil, Chrysostom, and Gregory the Great[112] affirm all the church traditions, including monasticism.[113] Here Iosif ties these authoritative saints and others, such as Ephrem of Syria, to the early monastic Fathers, Anthony and Pachomius, and to 11 named and three unnamed early holy women from the days of the apostles through the fourth century—almost all martyrs resisting marriage, or in one case a return to harlotry—and clearly impressive to Iosif's thoroughly ascetic mind.[114]

In fact, one could argue that defense of the legitimacy and sanctity of monasticism lay at the core of Iosif's defense of Orthodoxy, as he specifically had to affirm the truth of the eschatological statements and hence the overall authority of one of the great monastic Fathers, Ephrem of Syria: "For as Saint Ephrem wrote, so our holy and saintly and God-bearing Fathers all wrote in agreement and like unto the prophetic, evangelic, and apostolic pronouncements."[115]

In Iosif's more developed *Prosvetitel'* version of this motif, the defense of Orthodoxy became more pointed in relation to the attacks on Ephrem:

> Those heretics, who so speak, wish to introduce an evil opinion into mankind, so that people start to consider the writings of our saintly and God-bearing Father Ephrem false, and on this account demonstrate all the writings of our holy Fathers to be false.[116]

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[111] *Prosvetitel'*, 11:444–445.

[112] What precisely Iosif might have known of the liturgies ascribed to Gregory would be worth tracking down. See above, note 12.

[113] *Prosvetitel'*, 11:420–421.

[114] From the time of the apostles, Migdonia, Sophia, Eleutheria and three unidentified royal wives; under Trajan, Eudokia; at the time of Decius's persecutions, Epistimia, Anastasia, and another Sophia; under Galienus, Eugenia; under Diocletian, Febronia, and the fourth-century non-martyr Eupraxia, as well the obscure nun Theodora.

[115] *AfED*, 409.

[116] *Prosvetitel',* 10:384.

The church canons, the secular Late Roman and Byzantine legislation contained in the ecclesiastical law books, and sacred history serve as Iosif's essential authorities in his advocacy and justification of heretics' repression and permanent vigilance—a virtual inquisition by the faithful—against the worst of such culprits. Nevertheless, monastic Fathers also play a modest role in the argumentation and a major one in the self-justification of Iosif and his party. So does John Chrysostom overall, whom Iosif also uses extensively in his rule. Iosif also cites, or, rather, misrepresents Climacus as an authority on receiving back heretics into the church,[117] and even confuses him with Chrysostom as the author of a "Commentary" on the Evangel of John.[118] Basil and Gregory of Nyssa then appear as authorities on permanent repentance for sincere exapostates,[119] which leads to Iosif's chief argument in favor of life imprisonment for them—namely, the examples of voluntary, life-long, penitent murderers and fornicators found in the *paterica*.[120] As usual, Iosif may be somewhat stretching here for in one of his examples, the cave hermit Martin of Mt. Massico in Campania, the ostensible issue was to avoid women altogether, not to repent.[121]

It turns out that not theology per se, where Iosif relied chiefly upon Scripture and logic, but defense of the institution of monasticism and vigorous suppression of heresy constitute Iosif's two most prominent uses of authorities in *Prosvetitel'*. For the latter, the sheer example of monks who fought the historic heresies stands out as the chief place of the monastic Fathers in Iosif's inquisitorial program. Against those who would leave it solely to the secular authorities to handle dissidence, Iosif pulls out the stops with one of his characteristic, "gotcha," syllogistic (technically, enthymematic) rhetorical questions:[122] "If it is not proper for monks to condemn a heretic or an apostate, then why did the great Anthony condemn

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[117] *AfED*, 506 (*Prosvetitel'*, 15:511): Climacus admitted that he could not explain why the church canons appeared more lenient toward heretics than fornicators; see *St. John Climacus: Ladder,* 15:48; and PG 88: col. 889B.

[118] *Prosvetitel'*, 15:513.

[119] *AfED*, 506 (*Prosvetitel'*, 15:514–515).

[120] *Prosvetitel'*, 16:536–538.

[121] Gregory the Great, *Dialogi* 3.16, PL 77: cols. 253A–266C. English translation in *Saint Gregory the Great. Dialogues*, 141–145.

[122] On Iosif's expert, if untrained, use of formal logic, see Goldfrank, "Adversus Haeriticos Novgorodensos."

them?"[123] Following upon the example of Anthony come Paphnutius the Confessor at the First Ecumenical Council, Macarius, Ephrem, Isaac of Dalmatia, Euthymius the Great (376/7–473), Auxentius (ca. 420–470), Daniel the Stylite, Sabbas of Jerusalem, Theodosius the Great, Peter the Monk (later seventh century) and some opponents of iconoclasm: "Theodosia the Martyr (d. 717?),[124] Ioannicius, Arsacius, Isacius, Theophanes the Confessor (760–817),[125] and many others who left monasteries and hermitages and went to the city to condemn and anathematize heretics."[126] Their ultimate goal, like Iosif's, was to change state policy. Accordingly, seen through a monastic prism and in the light of the patristic background, Iosif's famous (or infamous?) powerful strictures about the tsar's majesty and power, adapted from the sixth-century Agapetus and placed in "Slovo 16" of *Prosvetitel'*, appear far more restrictive than enabling of the sovereign's authority.[127] Indeed, convinced of his grounding in sacred traditions and enhancing his pastoral responsibilities,[128] Iosif applied his authoritative monastic

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[123] *AfED*, 496 (*Prosvetitel'* 13: 498); compare Athanasius of Alexandria, *Vita et conversatio S.P.N. Antonii*, PG 26: col. 912AB. In calling Metropolitan Zosima (r. 1490–1494) the "new Arius" and the "forerunner of the Antichrist," Iosif may have culled from Anthony's characterization of Arius according to Athanasius: *AfED*, 425, 428, 473.

[124] Iosif underscores Theodosia's sanctity in the fight against iconoclasm, as "odes, lauds, canons, and troparions" are chanted in her honor on 29 May, and her relics proved especially miraculous and healing: *AfED*, 497 (*Prosvetitel'* 3: 501). Her celebration was enhanced by having a date identical to the feast day of the martyr Theodosia of Tyre (d. ca. 303). For her brief life in a Synaxarion see Costas, "Life of St. Theodosia of Constantinople," 1–8.

[125] *AfED*, 497–498 (*Prosvetitel'*, 13: 498–501, and note *n*). The *Prosvetitel'* version adds Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus, as monks, to the original list, found in the earliest and separate *Slovo* version (and so published in *AfED*) of Ioannicius and Arsakius, disciples of Theodore the Studite, as well as the latter, while Theophanes the Confessor joined others in using demonstrative vigils and prayers to pressure the Byzantine court in favor of icons: *LER*, 1:450–451.

[126] *AfED*, 497 (*Prosvetitel'*, 13:501).

[127] The issues involved in the analysis of Iosif's political statements are discussed in Szeftel, "Joseph Volotsky's Political Ideas," 19–29; see also Goldfrank, "Deep Origins of Tsar'-Muchitel'."

[128] The lead sentence of Iosif's instruction to his successor, which is "Slovo 11" of his extended rule, is taken from John Climacus's *Liber ad pastorem*: *MRIV*, "The Extended Rule," "Discourse XI," no. 1, 242; and PG 88: col. 1196D. However, of his own accord Iosif adds the apostolic

notions quite freely in dealing with the world. He included such basic principles as the above-cited statement that all Divine Writings are in essential agreement and the church's body of laws—among them, selected Late Roman and Byzantine secular legislation—qualifies as Divine Writings.[129] This meant that anyone standing in his way obtained a polemical double blow of canon-legal threats and moral preaching with eschatological consequences.[130] Thus, a prince who complained of a bondsman whom Iosif had tonsured receives a lesson from the "Canons of the Holy Fathers" on giving one's adolescent slaves the alternatives of tonsure or marriage, another from Climacus on tonsure as a "second baptism," and then an alleged warning from Patriarch Nicephorus the Confessor of Constantinople: "If anyone puts aside the angelic monastic garb and begins to live in the world, it is proper to anathematize him as a heretic and apostate."[131]

In an analogous case, where Iosif is summoning three abbots and an archpriest to help locate a runaway monk, he uses a different version of this warning and those of other church canons, and then works of Basil and Nikon to emphasize the solemnity and irrevocability of the monastic vow. He then ends with strictures taken from Climacus and Dorotheus, which link together the Devil and demons, vainglory and pride, the loss of discernment and "intellective light," and separation from God.[132]

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succession of "pastors and teachers," who "have received from the Lord Jesus Christ the authority to bind and loose."

[129] *AfED*, 491 (*Prosvetitel'* 13:485).

[130] Nil Sorskii's politically minded, self-styled disciple Vassian Patrikeev was hardly different: "If monks do not keep their vows, Holy Scripture threatens them with torments and condemns them to the eternal fire, and calls them apostates, and renders an anathema": Kazakova, *Vassian Patrikeev*, 224. Threats of eternal punishment, since they were part and parcel of received monastic traditions, were not entirely foreign to Nil Sorskii either: "we should resist evil thoughts with whatever strength we have. This results in a crown or punishment: crowns for the victors, torments for the sinners who have not repented in this life:" *NSPU*, 21. Cf. Climacus, *Ladder* 15.74; PG 88: col. 897A. Nil's above-cited statement is followed by a related citation from Peter Damaskenos: cf., "Treasury of Divine Knowledge," *Philokalia* 3:84. The formula, "Struggle—worthy of either crowns or torments," is found also in the pseudo-Basilian *Penances* copied by Kiril of Beloozero: Prokhorov, *Entsiklopediia*, 39.

[131] *PIV*, 152.

[132] *PIV*, 145–148; cf. Climacus, *Ladder* 26.8; PG 88: col. 1013D; Dorotheus of Gaza, *Doctrina* 12.7, PG 88: cols. 1760A–1761B; and Wheeler, *Dorotheus*

Iosif's extended monastic rule, which in its final form may have been the work of his disciples,[133] exhibits a great deal of breadth for a work of this genre. It combines a testament, aphorisms, sermon fragments, complete homilies, typikon bits, systematic regulations, a ceremonial protocol, hagiography, autobiography, polemics, and a non-sacramental penitential. Basil of Caesarea and the *paterica* tradition of stories and apophthegms[134] lead as Iosif's chief authorities, with the two Johns (Chrysostom and Climacus) following, and Nikon of the Black Mountain as the greatest single source of citations. Looming in the background stand a variety of older rules and teachings: the *Precepts* of Pachomius, some of these perhaps filtered through John of Pantellaria (eighth century);[135] the *Parenesis* of Ephrem; the legacies of Theodore the Studite and Athanasius of Athos (d. 1000); the disciplinary aspects of Symeon the New Theologian; and even Byzantine ecclesiastical and civil legislation. These were augmented by later Athonite and other Byzantine traditions and practices, including the Evergetian and related reforms;[136] the *Jerusalem Typikon*; and the individual cell rules, which monks might follow. Select hagiography including that of John of Damascus, some of it excerpted in Nikon and some, perhaps, in full in Nil Sorskii's new collection, played a role. And so did some Russian authorities, such as the traditions of Kirillof Beloozero (d. 1427), the living example of his cloister, and recent native hagiography—at least the *Pecherskii Patericon* (redacted early 15th century), the Life of Sergii of Radonezh (d. 1392) by Epifanii Premudryi (d. post–1418) as revised in

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of Gaza, 190. Dorotheus's full statement suggests also the possibility of falling into heresy.

[133] *MRIV*, 51–52; and Pliguzov, "O khronologii poslanii," 1058.

[134] This includes Gregory/Pseudo-Gregory the Great and his "Life" of Benedict, comprising Book 2 of his four *Dialogues*.

[135] John of Pantelleria: "*Typikon*. Old Russian translation: Mansvetov, *Tserkovnyi ustav*, 441–445. This typikon was found in the early Slavic nomocanons (Golubinskii, *Istoriia Russkoi tserkvi,* 1.1: 652–653), but not all of the Pachomian precepts with analogies in Iosif's rule are found in John's *typikon*. So the question of influence here remains open.

[136] The reform legacy probably did not come via the slight modification by Sava of Hilandar (1169–1237) of the original Evergetian Rule (1054–1070, revised 1098–1118). Timothy of Evergetis and most of his Byzantine derivatives demanded equality of food in their cenobia, but Sava did not, although he did retain other such Evergetian strictures as co-governance and periodic reading of the rule. See Goldfrank, "Hilandarski Tipik"; and *MRIV*, 67–68.

one of its redactions by Pakhomii the Serb (active pre-1438–post-1484);[137] and Pakhomii's Life of Kirill of Beloozero—or their oral equivalents—and other Russian oral monastic lore.[138] Yet, with all these authoritative sources at his command, the biting *patericon* story cum aphorism stands out as Iosif's favorite way to make a point: "Once a demon came to the brothers in the cenobium, saw a boy in the cenobium, and said: 'I do not need to be here, for he will be much more troublesome here than I.'"[139]

Before moving on to some comparisons with Nil, we ought to note a final aspect of Iosif's writings that linked his apologetics and his monastic corpus, which was his sense of repentance and the role of commemorations. These figured heavily in the terrestrial monastic economy of his day. His "Slovo 4" of *Prosvetitel',* commences as a defense of the Orthodox notion of the "Divine Economy," starting with the Harrowing of Hell and the release of the imprisoned souls of the righteous Jews,[140] and ending with the problem of repentance and salvation. Utilizing both a monastic Father, pseudo-Macarius, and the great bishops, Iosif promotes the efficacy of sincere repentance, offerings, and prayers, including prayers for the dead.[141] The utility and need for commemorations also occupies a special place in the extended rule, where he refers to a separate "Account ... of the *Synodicon*,"[142] recently published in full with the patristic citations and commentary that

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[137] Kloss, *Izbrannye trudy*, 337–338, 359.

[138] For more information and references regarding Iosif's sources, see *MRIV*, 61–70.

[139] *MRIV*, "The Brief Rule," "Discourse X^B," no. 6, p. 156; "The Extended Rule," "Discourse IX," no. 2, p. 221.

[140] *Prosvetitel'* 4:139, 161–162. For the alleged "heresy of the Novgorod Heretics combated in "Slovo 4," Iosif took and abstracted from Gregentius's rabbinical opponent Herbano the notion that a Jewish-thinking heretic would consider it "improper" for God to take the form of a lowly man, suffer crucifixion, descend to Hell, and trick Satan in order to free deserving souls: Berger, *Life and Works of Saint Gregentios*, 762–769.

[141] *Prosvetitel'*, 4:160–169. The citation of Macarius (or perhaps Pseudo-Macarius) resurfaces in a different form in the defense of monasticism to demonstrate that failure to achieve wonder-working powers in one's lifetime is no proof that thaumaturgy will not be granted in the afterlife to one who almost obtained it in this world: *Prosvetitel'* 11:434–435.

[142] *MRIV*, "Extended Rule," "Discourse XIII," (Tradition 1 [XIII/i]) no. 1, p. 271; no. 22, p. 277; see also *MRIV,* 309–311 (trans.): cf. Kazakova, *Vassian Patrikeev,* 354–356.

follow.[143] Again the authorities were Iosif's vintage combination of hagiography,[144] writings by leading Fathers—in this case Ephrem, Gregory of Nyssa, and Chrysostom—and *paterica* lessons, including some by Gregory/pseudo-Gregory the Great, whose legacy played an essential role in the related "birth of Purgatory" in the Latin West.[145]

To conclude the discussion of Iosif, his general grounding in a wide scope of church Fathers, as well as his trenchant style and relevance for both monastic clergy and for hierarchs of monastic origin of his epoch, secured his popularity. And his sweep might well have overwhelmed our hypothetical Ferapontov novice.[146]

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We could comment a great deal on Iosif's and Nil's proximity to and divergence from patristric traditions, but these are well-worn trails, all leading to the observation that Iosif, as a practical head of a multi-tasking cenobium, had to compromise the ideals of spiritual Fathers in ways Nil avoided. Nonetheless, the solid theoretical grounding in monastic Fathers and the willingness to promote their authority on the part of *both* of Muscovy's stellar theorists cannot be doubted. Nil simply followed the masters in recommending that one find a sound mentor or rely on the Fathers' writings, or if possible, do both.[147] Iosif's final message in his extended rule was that all must "proceed with the witness of the Divine Writings."[148]

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[143] Shablovoi, *Sinodik*, 127–156.

[144] Here Iosif employed the "Life" of Paisius the Great (fifth century), another of those edited and copied by Nil Sorskii.

[145] Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, 88–95.

[146] But in this regard, we must not forget that the theological writings attributed to Maksim "the Greek" (in Russia, as of 1518, d. ca. 1555), whose Renaissance Italian education gave him greater knowledge and insights into the literary, philosophical, and theological context of the great *doctors* of the Eastern Church than any Russian of his time enjoyed, starting with the 17th century proved to be even more popular than *Prosvetitel'*. See Olmsted, "Modeling Maksim Grek's Collection Types," 106–133. By my estimation, the works credited to Maksim survive in maybe three times as many codices as those of Iosif (or Nil).

[147] *NSPU*, 13–15; Prokhorov, *Nil Sorskii*, 100–103; *NSAW*, 129–130; cf. *The Ascetical Homilies of Saint Isaac the Syrian* 23:117.

[148] *MRIV*, "The Extended Rule," "Discourse XIV," nos. 37–38, p. 307.

As I mentioned in an earlier article,[149] moreover, Nil's selection of 24 saints for his *Sobornik* either set the stage for, or lay within a continuum of some of the subsequent discourse.

When Nil's most politically minded, self-styled disciple, the active "Non-Possessor" Vassian Patrikeev (forcibly tonsured in 1499, d. after 1531),[150] compiled his list of first-millennium monastic Fathers who allegedly did not possess villages (or was this simply fields?),[151] he named ten saints, nine of whose written lives Nil had included in his *Sobornik*: Anthony, Pachomius, Hilarion, Euthymius, Sabbas, Theodosius, Symeon the Stylite of the Wondrous Mountain, Theodore the Studite, and Athanasius of Athos. The sole outlier relative to the *Sobornik* was the likely misidentified "Apollonius the Great."[152] Earlier, Iosif's extended rule drew upon eight of the nine whom Vassian took from Nil. Iosif omitted Hilarion, but added Arsenius the Great and John of Damascus. Iosif's defense of monasticism and the habit, going through only the first century of historic monasticism, drew upon four of Nil's seven from that period: Anthony again and Pachomius, Hilarion, and Chariton. Similarly, among the historical examples of monks who left their cloister to combat heresy stood six of the ten whom Nil so flagged in the *Sobornik*: Anthony, Euthymius, Sabbas, Theodosius, Isaac of Dalmatia, and Ioannicius the Great, as well as three more from just Nil's "On Mental Activity:" Ephrem, Daniel the Stylite, and Maximus the Confessor. Only three such activists lay outside of Nil's extant written corpus: Auxentius, Peter

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[149] Goldfrank, "Recentering Nil Sorskii," 374–375: the text above expands on the exposition in the cited article.

[150] Innokentii Okliabinin is Nil's only known genuine disciple; the advice-seeking addressees of epistles, Gurii Tushin and German Podol'nyi, as well as Vassian, do not thereby qualify as genuine full-scale disciples, and none are so identified in contemporary sources. See *NSAW*, 37–44, 58–60.

[151] What practical policies Vassian was seeking with his attacks on monastic villages is something of a mystery. Andrei Pliguzov argues, with precise references to Vassian's presentation and commentary on canon law, that he aimed to strengthen the bishops by having them (that is, their officials) administer monastic property. How this could have been realized in practice, at a time when the large, self-contained monasteries, with their own inner structures and connections to the outside world, were expanding their economic activities, is difficult to imagine. See Pliguzov, *Polemika*, 172. Cf. Ostrowski, "Church Polemics," 363.

[152] Kazakova, *Vassian Patrikeev*, 224–225. The only Apollonius whom I can locate is a certain Apollonius of Ephesus from the time of the apostolic Fathers: PG 5: cols. 1381–1385.

the Monk, and Theodosia of Constantinople.[153] Hence Nil and Iosif operated in the same patristic world, and our diligent Ferapontov ascetic reader would see them in this way.

However, maybe one paradoxical aspect of Nil's and Iosif's writings might have puzzled this young monk. Nil, in his hagiographic redacting and his pedagogical citing and adapting, kept to established Greek, Syrian, Egyptian, and pre-Schism Latin Fathers, while Iosif composed a polemical-didactic "Response to the Censorious and Brief Account of the Holy Fathers of the Land of Rus'" as "Slovo 10" of his extended rule. Iosif's ostensible opponents did not dispute the sanctity of Rus' traditions. Rather, if anything, these adversaries were less flexible than he, as they allegedly said: "In earlier times our holy Fathers instituted in writing the cenobitic teachings and traditions (*predanie*);[154] now it is not proper to do so, but only to teach by word."[155]

They were correct concerning the Rus' past, since the only previous cenobitic rule was that of Evfrosin of Pskov (d. 1479)[156] and he was not yet a recognized saint. Indeed, not one word of Iosif's "Brief Account" mentions a Rus' written cenobitic rule. So perhaps they were attempting to divide Nil from Iosif, as the former's *Predanie* was not cenobitic.[157] Whoever the opponents may have been here, Iosif's rejoinder relied on Greek Fathers on two levels. The title "Response to the Censorious" and the characterization of the opponent as "overweening, very boastful," and "censorious" is taken from an apologia towards the end of Philipp's *Dioptra*, where he insists that everything he has written is from "the Divine Writings,[158] as if Iosif was associating himself with that revered author. Secondly, to justify writing, he correctly cites two

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[153] *AfED*, 497–498 (*Prosvetitel'*. 13: 498–501). Iosif could learn from available histories that *Auksentii mnikh* (the monk) and *Petr mnikh* took part respectively in the Third and Sixth Ecumenical Councils: *LER*, 1:338, 413. Iosif's mentioning of Arsacius and Isicius together with Ioannicius may have come from a source related to "The Life of St. Theodora the Empress" (Vinson, "Life of St. Theodora, 375), rather than "The Life of St. Ioannikios" (Sullivan, "Life of Saint Ioannikios").

[154] Again: alternative translation for *predanie:* instruction, see above, note 74 and the text to it.

[155] *MRIV*, "The Extended Rule," "Discourse X," no. 2, p. 225.

[156] *DRIU*, 38–56; German transl, von Lilienfeld, *Nil Sorskij*, 295–313.

[157] I missed this distinction in my analysis of Iosif's relations with the Trans-Volgans in my introduction to his rule: *MRIV*, 108 (1st ed., 50).

[158] Prokhorov, *"Dioptra,"* 119 (14th c. Rus' text), 314 (modern Russian translation), 503 (Greek original).

authorities, Climacus and Nikon of the Black Mountain, and stretches a third, Chrysostom, by adding "and writings."[159] In this manner, Iosif trumps his opponents by using earlier Greek Fathers to justify his own divergence from what may have been a Rus' practice, but in no way constituted canonic precedent.

Indeed Iosifov honored Nil, and Kirillov honored Iosifov. For it was for Iosif's monastery that their common student Nil Polev wrote in his 1508 codex:

> ... of Father Nil, who at the Sora Hermitage on the White Lake [Beloozero] courageously struggled against the Devil in our time, that of the last generation, physically and mentally. ... and departed to his beloved Christ. And for us, he left, as a deposit or a loan, his divinely inspired and soul-profiting writings.[160]

According the 1591 Iosifov library inventory, the monastery possessed four or five complete copies of Nil's major work,[161] and we know of at least two more and a total of 18 or 19 cloister figures owning or copying his works.[162] By contrast, if that inventory mentions eleven copies of his extended rule, and at least five, if not nine, of *Prosvetitel'*,[163] Kirillov's 1601 inventory listed only two or three of Nil's major works, yet likewise three of *Prosvetitel'*.[164]

Nil claimed to be writing for cenobites as well as skete dwellers. In the oldest extant manuscript penned, according to tradition, by Iosif—a full 345 pages stemming from his pre-abbatial days—we find him starting with Anthony and four other desert Fathers before crafting the 60 percent of the book devoted to selections from the hesychastic authorities, among them Ephrem (allegedly,

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[159] Iosif also adduces a fourth, Symeon the New Theologian, whose genuine and pseudo-Slavic legacy, I have yet fully to check for Iosif's citation; for all four and the sources for three of them, see *MRIV*, "The Extended Rule," "Discourse X," nos. 2–4, pp. 225–226; no. 8, p. 226–227.

[160] Eparkh. 349:195. Borovkova-Maikova noted that this inscription "is often met": *NSPU*, *Prilozhenie*, xiv.

[161] KTs-*V*, 80, 81, 83, 96

[162] See Goldfrank, "Nil Sorskii's Following," esp. 215, 221.

[163] KTs-*V*, 56, 77

[164] Dmitrieva, *Opis'...Kirillo-Belozerskogo*, 130, 132–133, 139 (for the third, the issue is whether the manuscript starting with the "Scete Typikon, as did the Nil Sorskii-Nil Polev codex, also contained Nil Sorskii's work. The author of this article admits his surprise in discovering not only that Iosifov was even more book-oriented than Kirillov, but also that Iosif was seemingly as popular as Nil within Kirillov.

"On Stillness"), Isaac, Climacus, Symeon, and Peter Damaskenos.[165] So, staying within the walls of Ferapontov for his entire life (except when on mission), our hypothetical monk, using both Iosif and Nil as spiritual guides, could have said, adapting from Jerome's famous dream, "I am a cenobite, a hesychast, and prepared to be a martyr for the faith."[166] And until a new mentality influenced by Western education regarding thought and education gained ascendance in Russia, as would occur in the 17th century, the notions concerning the church Fathers and the authority of their writings, which we encounter in both Nil and Iosif, as well as the panorama exhibited by Makarii's *Menology* and the ever-present pre-Baroque iconography and liturgies, would continue to dominate the Russian church.

[165] KTs-*V*, 369–370; Eparkh. 357. This manuscript also includes other excerpts from the Fathers, an anonymous homily on "mental prayer and attention," Gregory the Monk ("On Life and on Heresy"), patristic excerpts on Creation, Hippolytus/Pseudo-Hippolytus on the end of the world, a canon (ode) to John the Forerunner, a rule for psalmody, a shorter version of the cell rule for illiterates from the "Scete Typikon," and one of the same pieces of healing advice determining when to administer bleeding on the basis of the lunar cycle, day of the month, or season, that is found in the codex of Kirill of Beloozero, containing his version of the "Scete Typikon." See Prokhorov, *Entsiklopediia,* 125–126. This was probably one of the reported 14 books that Iosif and six comrades took with them from Pafnutiev in 1479, when they set out for Volokolamsk: *MRIV*, 27, 55, and was later highly valued and not to be lent out to cells, much less beyond the cloister—the interlibrary loan system of those days.

[166] Downgrading his immense contribution to Latin and Western Christianity, the extraordinarily gifted Jerome reported an unfortunate dream in which a judge condemned him with the words, *Ciceronianus es, non Christianus* ("Thou art a Ciceronian, not a Christian"), and then ordered him beaten. Fortunately for themselves, so far as we know, neither Nil nor Iosif ever felt the need to berate himself for "wordsmithing," since each put it to the service of enlightenment and salvation of others within Russia's sacred traditions, as Orthodox theologians, writers, and teachers were expected to do.

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THE MOSCOW COUNCILS OF 1447 TO 1589 AND THE CONCILIAR PERIOD IN RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH HISTORY

Donald Ostrowski

The years 1447 to 1589 were notable for church councils in the Russian Orthodox Church. To the extent they were significant, one can justifiably refer to this time as the conciliar period in the history of the church. In approximately the same period, councils were also prominent in the Western Church, such as the councils of Constance (1414–1418), Ferrara-Florence (1438–1439), Worms (1520), and Trent (1542–1563).

Conciliar activities in the Western Church and in the Rus' Church were galvanized by reaction to a combination of internal and external challenges. In Muscovy, the initial challenge came from the proposed Union of Florence (1439) and the subsequent arrival in Moscow of the Uniate Metropolitan Isidor (1441), appointed by the patriarch of Constantinople. This appointment was unacceptable to the Muscovite ecclesiastical and secular leaders and, combined with the events surrounding the impending fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks, led the Rus' bishops to take action. In two councils—one in December 1447, the other in December 1448—the prelates took the steps necessary for choosing and consecrating their own metropolitan. Until then, the metropolitan of Rus' could be consecrated only after receiving the sanction

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period, besides choosing metropolitans, were convoked to investigate heretics (1480s–1550s), to implement internal church reform (1500s–1560s), to resolve ongoing disputes with the state over both the acquisition of *votchiny* (patrimonies) by monasteries and on *tarkhan* (free man) immunities (1551–1584), and finally, to elevate the metropolitan to patriarchal status (1589).

The timespan from 1447, when the Rus' bishops received approval from Grand Prince Vasilii II to choose their own metropolitan, to 1589, when the patriarchate of Moscow was established, was a formative age in Russian Orthodox Church history and is a well-defined period for us to discuss the role and significance of autonomous metropolitan councils. In the process we see a church and a state that for the most part, despite some differences, cooperated with one another to the mutual benefit of both. We also find a church that, despite going its own way within the Eastern Church community, still accepted the authority of Byzantine canon law and deferred to the Greek Church regarding the proper observance of rituals and practices.

Although a significant amount of work has been done on specific councils, such as those of 1503, 1504, 1551, and 1666–1667, very little has been written about the importance of councils in the history of the Russian Church in general and on the councils of this period as a group in particular. A work published by N. P. Turchaninov in 1829 provided a brief summary of a few of the church councils that occurred in Rus' lands between 988 and 1551.[1] In 1906, two works came out on the topic of Moscow Church councils in the 16th and 17th centuries: I. Likhnitskii published a four-part article in the journal *Khristianskoe chtenie*;[2] and N. F. Kapterev published a three-part article in the journal *Bogoslavskii vestnik*.[3] Neither of these articles attempted any kind of systematic survey.

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[1] Turchaninov, *O soborakh*.

[2] Likhnitskii, "Osviashchennyi sobor."

[3] Kapterev, "Tsar' i tserkovnye moskovskie sobory." Emil Herman refers to a third monographic treatment, published in 1906, by D. Malinovskii titled *Osviashchennyi sobor XVI–XVII vv.* (St. Petersburg), but I was unable to locate this work.

In 1936, Emil Herman, S. J., published a survey of church councils in Russia to 1918. For the period from 1274 to 1690, he provides brief descriptions of 64 councils, but not all his information is accurate.[4] In 2002, Archimandrite Makarii provided a systematic overview of church councils during the time of Metropolitan Makarii (1542–1563).[5] He treats every mention of the council as a genuine meeting of all the members—for example, in counting the appointments of all archbishops and bishops as requiring a formal session. Thus, he adduces 69 councils during that 21-year period, but does not consider the logistical problems involved in getting all the council members to Moscow so frequently (see below). Histories of the church that cover this period, even extensive histories, such as those of Makarii (Bulgakov) and Golubinskii, discuss only major church councils and do not mention, or mention only in passing, those that seem to be less significant.[6] The present survey seeks to lay the foundation for a more systematic study of Russian Church councils during this period.

In order to understand the role of church councils in Rus', we should have some comprehension of the role of church councils in the early Christian Church and in Eastern Christianity. A church council is an assembly of prelates that could also include other ecclesiastical and non-ecclesiastical representatives, such as monks, priests, deacons, or laymen. It formally deliberates over questions of discipline, doctrine, and ecclesiastical appointments. There are four types of councils: (1) ecumenical; (2) patriarchal; (3) metropolitan; and (4) episcopal.[7] As the names of the last three

[4] Herman, *De Fontibus iuris ecclesiastici russorum*, 42–65. For example, he considered the 1441 council to be genuine (46) whereas the mention of such a council's having met in that year dates to the 1460s and was probably an attempt to legitimize an earlier date for the election of Iona as metropolitan; Herman provided three chronicle references for a council in 1500, but none of them is correct (48); he assigns councils to 1520 and some other undetermined year during the metropolitanate of Varlaam (1511–1521), not on the basis of any primary source but on that of a historian, either Makarii or Golubinskii, who suggested there might have been such a council (49).

[5] Makarii, "Sobory russkoi tserkvi," 9–33.

[6] Makarii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, vols. 6, 7, and 8; and Golubinskii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, 2, pt. 1:469–875, 884–895.

[7] For this division, see A[risteides] P[apadakis] and A[nthony] C[utler], "Councils," in *ODB*, 1:540–543.

types of councils indicate, the jurisdiction of the prelate under whose guidance the council occurs defines its role. The ruler, whether emperor of Byzantium or the grand prince or tsar of Muscovy, could, and, on occasion, did, call a church council, and co-presided with the head of the church over all councils except those that dealt exclusively with matters of dogma.

The term "metropolitan" derives from the Greek μετροπολίς (*metropolis*), the capital of a province where the head of the episcopate resides. Our first evidence of this term's being used to designate a churchman's rank was in the Council of Nicaea (325) decision, which declared (canon 4; cf. canon 6) the right of the metropolitan to confirm episcopal appointments within his jurisdiction. Nicaea also ordered that councils be convoked by the metropolitan two times a year (canon 5). Canon 19 of Chalcedon confirmed this stipulation. Later, however, canon 8 of Trullo and canon 6 of Second Nicaea changed the frequency to at least once a year. In the *Authentic or New Constitutions of the Emperor Justinian*, the stipulation is "once or twice every year."[8] In Muscovy, convening councils that frequently may not have been logistically feasible, and for most years we do not have any record of a council's being held at all. Table 1 presents the number of Muscovite Church councils for which we have reliable evidence broken down according to 50-year periods from 1401 to 1600.

Table 1: Muscovite Church Councils according to 50-Year Periods, 1401–1600

1401–1450	*1451–1500*	*1501–1550*	*1551–1600*
6	12	12	20

It is possible these numbers are more representative of the meagerness of our evidence than of the non-occurrence of councils. The church historian Makarii (Bulgakov) asserted that an attempt was made in the Rus' Church to have at least one council per year, sometimes more, in which the prelates might sit with brief interruptions through a series of councils.[9] Some of these

[8] Justinian, *Corpus juris civilis*, 7 (17):87–88.

[9] Makarii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, 8:171–172; cf. Golubinskii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, 2, pt. 2:19. In support of his claim, Makarii cited the report of Hans Kobenzl (Koblenzl), envoy of the Emperor Maximilian II to Muscovy in

councils may not have had any "business" as such, and no decision was required of them. According to earliest church terminology, these gatherings would have been called a "synod" (σύνοδοι, *synodoi*) in contrast to a council (συμβούλιο, *symboulio*) for deliberation of an issue or problem. Very early in the church's history, however, that terminological distinction was lost.

The income-expense (*prikhodo-raskhodnye*) books of monasteries need to be examined on a systematic basis to see whether hegumens and archimandrites traveled to Moscow during years when we do not have other evidence for a council's having been convened. There are other exceptions, as in September 1472, when the metropolitan as well as the bishops of Sarai and of Perm' with "all the sacred council" gathered for the funeral of Prince Iurii Vasil'evich, the grand prince's brother.[10] But this seems to have been a purely ceremonial occasion, when no business was conducted and no deliberation was required. Therefore, I have excluded such gatherings from the count. Besides, it is not clear if "all the sacred council" indeed means all the bishops, especially when, as in this case, only two are mentioned. In addition, it is unlikely that a formal meeting of all council members needed to take place each time a new prelate had to be appointed. Such appointments could occur as the result of consultation between the grand prince and metropolitan, who would be acting in the name of "all the sacred council." The selection of a metropolitan, however, would most likely have required a formal session, if only to agree on nominees to offer the grand prince. Thus, while I include deliberations over metropolitan nominees as formal councils, I exclude appointments of archbishops and bishops done in the name of the council.

The time of the year when full Muscovite councils were held seems to have been related to the duties of the bishops in their own districts and to the weather. Jack E. Kollmann, Jr. analyzed the months when the Muscovite Church councils of the 16th century met. He pointed out the grouping of a number of councils that

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1575: "This Metropolitan holds a synod every year and all the bishops and other prelates take part in it." Mitchell and Zguta, "Sixteenth-Century 'Account,'" 405.

[10] *PSRL*, 8: 175; 12: 150; 25: 298; 27: 304; 28: 134, 304; and *Ioasafovskaia letopis'*, 82.

had meetings in January and February (9) and in July (5) and explains that frequency as the result of two circumstances: "the roads were more passable at those times of the year, and the liturgical responsibilities of the prelates were relatively light then."[11]

Kollmann's analysis is valuable, but we can refine and supplement the information on which his conclusions are based. First, there was no church council in January 1581. A document originally dated by its scribe to January 1581 is the same as the decision for the January 1580 Council, but does not represent a new gathering to confirm that decision, as some have proposed. Instead, the date "1581" is the result of a scribal error in the manuscript copies.[12] Second, the idea that the 1503 Council met in July, August, and September requires some clarification. We have two sets of decisions from that council: one set is dated 6 August; the other, 1 September. If we extrapolate backwards from the 1 September date we can say that the council members continued meeting in August after making the first set of decisions (instead of dispersing and then reconvening). The only agenda for the meeting in September seems to have been to sign the final version of the second set of decisions. Likewise, we can extrapolate from the 6 August date backwards to suggest that the council members began meeting in July because 6 August represents only the date when they signed the final version of the first set of decisions.[13]

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[11] Kollmann, "Moscow *Stoglav*," 133.

[12] Ostrowski, "Did a Church Council Meet in 1581?," 258–265.

[13] Pliguzov rejected the 6 August date traditionally associated with the *Council Decision concerning Fees*. He points out that 6 August was a holy day, the Transfiguration (Preobrazhenie) of Jesus Christ. Therefore, according to Pliguzov, the date in some copies of the *Council Decision concerning Fees* of 6 August is "improbable" (*neveroiatna*) since prelates had duties to perform in churches and could not be making council decisions. He takes as authoritative the testimony of some copies of the *Decision concerning Fees* that the decision was issued on 1 September. Pliguzov, "Sobornyi otvet," 754–755; and Pliguzov, *Polemika v russkoi tserkvi*, 334–335. As the result of a textual analysis of the copies of the *Council Decision* available to me, I found that I had to disagree with my learned colleague on this point. Three of the manuscript copies of the *Decision concerning Fees* that contain the 6 August date—RNB, Solovetskoe sobranie (hereafter, Solov.), No. 1054/1194, RNB, No. F.II.80, and RNB, Pogodinskoe sobranie (hereafter, Pogodin), No. 1572—are closer

Likhnitskii analyzed the duration of councils during the 16th and 17th centuries. He pointed out that it was possible for a council to have only one session as the Council of 1625 did (26 March), but he also claimed that councils could last many months. He cited the Council of 1553/54, which, according to him, lasted from October 1553 to June 1554.[14] But such a continuous sitting for one council or even a series of councils in Moscow is unlikely. In this case, it would require prelates' attendance during the Easter season, a very busy time on the church calendar. Likhnitskii is referring to the heresy trials of Ivan Viskovatyi, Matvei Bashkin, Hegumen Artemii of the Troitse-Sergiev Monastery, Ivan Timofeevich Borisov, Grigorii Timofeevich Borisov, and others, which most likely occurred at two church councils—one that sat from 25 October 1553 through 15 January 1554, and the other in June 1554. Even the Stoglav Council, which passed judgment on a codification of all previous rules, regulations, and decisions, met for only two months, as Kollmann has convincingly argued.[15]

Given that it took about three weeks (6 August to 1 September) for the prelates to reach the second set of decisions in 1503, we can tentatively propose that ordinary councils lasted a few weeks at most. The difference between decision dates of the 1503 Council helps us set a provisional date of three weeks earlier for the first session of that council—that is, sometime in mid-July. Kollmann's list may be supplemented with councils that met

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than other copies to the archetype of the text. The two copies on which Pliguzov based his 1 September date—GIM, Sinodal'noe sobranie (hereafter Sinod.) No. 183 and RNB, Pogodin, No. 1568—derive from later protographs. Moreover, Pogodin, No. 1568 itself derives from Sinod., No. 183. For text-critical reasons, the date 6 August is preferable. It is unlikely a copyist would have changed an original "1 September" date to "6 August," especially since 6 August is a holiday. It is more likely the "6 August" date was changed to "1 September" to harmonize with the date of the second *Council Decision*, concerning widower priests. Finally, if the prelates were in Moscow for the council on 6 August, they could not perform their usual duties in their home cathedrals. Whatever duties they had to perform in Moscow to mark the holiday would not have consumed their time, and so the *Council Decision* could have been, and probably was, signed on 6 August. The decision itself most likely occurred earlier, allowing time for the copying into document form to be signed by the prelates.

[14] Likhnitskii, "Osviashchennyi sobor" (May 1906): 723.

[15] Kollmann, "Moscow *Stoglav*," 131–160.

to choose a new metropolitan (although the timing of some of these councils was determined more by the death or resignation of the previous metropolitan), which adds another 10 councils for the 16th century alone. Finally, the council that Kollmann indicates as meeting in October 1573 actually met in October 1572 (7081). Thus, we obtain the results found in Table 2. Kollmann's preliminary results, nonetheless, hold up since we see the months most frequently entertaining councils as February (8) and July (7), followed by October and December (5) and January, May, and June (4 each). Thus, councils met most frequently at two times of year: late autumn through early winter (October–February), and late spring through early summer (May–July).

As in Byzantium, where the emperor and patriarch presided jointly over councils that dealt with external church matters, so too, in Muscovy, the grand prince and metropolitan presided together in such cases. The presence of the secular ruler was not required, however, when purely internal church matters, such as questions of dogma and the investigation and trial of heretics, were being discussed. For purposes of discussion of particular 15th- and 16th-century councils, one can sort them into five categories according to the types of issues that were decided: (1) choosing of metropolitans; (2) identification of heretics; (3) ecclesiastical discipline and reforms; (4) monastic acquisition of *votchiny* and disposition of *tarkhan*; and (5) establishment of the Moscow patriarchate.

Councils on Choosing of Metropolitans

For the purposes of this article, I am dating the beginning of the autonomous standing of the Rus' Church to 15 December 1447, when a council of Rus' bishops reached an agreement with Vasilii II.[16] In return for their support against his cousin Dmitrii Shemiaka, Vasilii agreed to have the bishops choose and consecrate a metropolitan without seeking the approval of the patriarch of Constantinople. No one had occupied the position of metropolitan of Rus' since Isidor was ousted in 1441.[17] Between then and the

[16] *AI*, 1:75–83.

[17] For a discussion of these events, see Alef, "Muscovy and the Council of Florence," 389–401. Cf. Ostrowski, *Muscovy and the Mongols*, 138–141.

Moscow Church Council of 1448, the Rus' Church operated without a chief prelate and in an indeterminate relationship to the patriarch in Constantinople. The Council of 1448 chose Iona, the bishop of Riazan', as metropolitan,[18] and he remained in that position until his death in 1461.

Table 2: Meetings of 15th- and 16th-Century Moscow Church Councils (by Month)

Month	Year of Church Council
January	1547, 1554a (to 15 January), 1580, 1589
February	1488, 1522 1539, 1547, 1549, 1555, 1564, 1581
March	1417, 1542, 1592
April	1461, 1525, 1572a
May	1525, 1531, 1572a, 1589
June	1473, 1511, 1554b, 1594
July	1401, 1503, 1509, 1551, 1566, 1570, 1584
August	1503
September	1490, 1495, 1503 (1 September only)
October	1464, 1490, 1533, 1553 (25–31 October), 1572b
November	1553, 1568
December	1447, 1448, 1504, 1553, 1586

With the choice of Iona as the metropolitan of Rus' with or without the approval of the patriarch, the bishops of the Rus' Church had embarked on their own course, yet without making a final break with the Byzantine Church. In a letter that can be dated to July 1451, Vasilii II wrote to the Emperor Constantine XI, informing him of the decision of the Council of 1448 and asking for the emperor's "good will" as well as the "blessing" of the patriarch.[19] Neither the emperor nor the patriarch was in a position to respond to Vasilii's missive because Constantinople was under immediate threat from the Ottoman Turks at the time. After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, there was no longer a Christian emperor in Constantinople to send a response, and the patriarch was preoccupied with his own position. By the end of the 15th century,

[18] *RIB*, 2nd ed., 6: cols. 539–542, 555–564; *PSRL*, 21:470; and *AI*, 1:86–87.
[19] *AI*, 1:83–85; *RIB*, 6: cols. 575–586; and *RFA*, 1:88–91. I am accepting Pliguzov's dating of this letter in *RFA*, 4:913.

Table 3: Muscovite Church Councils that Chose Metropolitans 1448–1586

Council	*Chose (Consecrated)*	*Previous Metropolitan*	*Time Lapsed*
1448 (December 15)	Iona	Isidor (imprisoned spring 1441)	7 years
1461 (April)*	Feodosii (May 9)	Iona (died March 31, 1461)	1 month
1464 (October)*	Filipp (November 11)	Feodosii (resigned September 13, 1464)	1 month
1473 (June 4)	Gerontii (June 29)	Fillip (died April 5, 1473)	2 months
1490 (September 12)	Zosima (September 26)	Gerontii (died May 28, 1489)	16 months
1495 (September 6)	Simon (September 20)	Zosima (resigned May 7, 1494)	16 months
1511 (June 27)	Varlaam (August 11)	Simon (died April 29/30, 1511)	2 months
1522 (February)*	Daniil (February 27)	Varlaam (resigned December 17, 1521)	2 months
1539 (February 5)	Ioasaf (February 9)	Daniil (deposed February 2, 1539)	3 days
1542 (March)*	Makarii (March 19)	Ioasaf (imprisoned January 3, 1542)	2 months
1564 (February 24)	Afanasii (March 5)	Makarii (died December 31, 1563)	>2 months
1566 (July 20)	Filipp (July 25)	Afanasii (resigned May 19, 1566)	2 months
1568 (November 11)	Kirill	Filipp (deposed November 4, 1568)	7 days
1572 (April)	Antonii	Kirill (died February 8, 1572)	2 months
1581 (February)	Dionisii	Antonii (died beginning of 1581)	1 month
1586 (December 11)	Iov	Dionisii (deposed after October 13, 1586)	>2 months

*When the exact date of election is not known, I have calculated two to five weeks before the date of consecration.

the Rus' Church reestablished intermittent contact with the patriarch, but no concomitant patriarchal confirmation of the Rus' metropolitan ensued.

In Table 3, I present information about Muscovite Church councils that chose metropolitans during this period. In each case, I indicate the year and, where available, the month of the council, whom the council chose, what happened to the previous metropolitan, and the amount of time between the end of the tenure of the previous metropolitan and the selection of the new one. The consecration of the new metropolitan generally took place two to five weeks after election.

Apparently, the usual practice was for a council to be convened to choose another metropolitan within a month or two after the previous metropolitan either died or resigned. A council that deposed a metropolitan (an event that occurred three times during this period) immediately chose his replacement. This usual practice makes all the more unusual the councils of 1490 and 1495, which chose replacements for the previous metropolitans only after 16 months had elapsed.

Councils on Heretics

The issue of heretics and heretical beliefs dominated the councils, at least in terms of numbers of councils devoted to this issue. The identification and disciplining of heretics began in 1487 with Archbishop Gennadii of Novgorod, who questioned the monk Zakhar of the Nemchinov Monastery about complaints from some of the other monks. Zakhar acknowledged that he was suspicious of the church prelates because they had paid a fee (*mzda*) to be installed.[20] Gennadii recognized this criticism as one made by the Strigol'niks, heretics of the 14th century,[21] and began a campaign to search out other heretics in the Novgorod archiepiscopal see. He then identified the heretics with Judaizers—in other words, Christians who focused unduly on the Jewish elements in Christianity, such as placing the Old Testament above the New Testament in importance, celebrating the Sabbath on Saturday, and learning

[20] *AFED*, 380.

[21] For available evidence on the Strigol'niks, see Fedotov, *Russian Religious Mind*, 113–148.

Hebrew. Contrary to a commonly mistaken notion, this movement has nothing to do in the Christian context with being Jewish or trying to convert Christians to Judaism.[22] According to Steven B. Bowman, Byzantine Church writers commonly referred to heretics as "Jews" and "Judaizers" whether or not Jewish influence was involved.[23] One of Gennadii's concerns was books the heretics were reading, some of which turned out to be books of the Old Testament—Genesis, 1 and 2 Samuel, Kings, Joshua, and the Wisdom of Menander—but also included the *Life of Pope Sylvester*, the *Life of Athanasius of Alexandria*, the *Sermon of Cosmas the Presbyter*, and a letter of Patriarch Photios to Prince Boris of Bulgaria. Gennadii's letter in 1489 to Ioasaf, the former archbishop of Rostov, may have been either an "interlibrary loan" request asking if any of the major monasteries in his jurisdiction had these works or an offer to send if they did not have them.[24] The mix of distinctly Christian and Old Testament works would tend to support the view that the heretics were Judaizing Christians rather than proselytizing Jews.

Gennadii managed to convince Ivan III (1462–1505) and Metropolitan Gerontii (1473–1489) to convene a council in 1488, which tried four of those accused and found three guilty, who were then remanded to the civil authorities for punishment.[25] In 1490 a number of those he accused of heresy were tried. Of those found guilty of heresy, the judgment was not to execute them as Gennadii wanted, but to exile some, excommunicate others, and im-

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[22] Dán, "'Judaizare'," 25–34. If so-called Judaizers had been Christians who had converted to Judaism and were seeking to convert others, they should have been more properly called "apostates," not "heretics." In a few places, Iosif Volotskii, who wrote an anti-heretic diatribe, the *Enlightener* (*Prosvetitel'*), does refer to them as apostates, but apostasy is not what they were tried and punished for.

[23] Bowman, *Jews of Byzantium*, 29–30.

[24] *AFED*, 320. Such a question on the part of a Rus' prelate about books of the Bible should not arouse surprise because at that time no complete version of the Bible existed in East Slavic territory. Until the late 15th century only lectionaries, the book of Psalms, Gospels, and Acts of the Apostles were used. Gennadii's realization of the woeful state of Rus' Church knowledge when faced with the heretics' reading matter may have been what prompted him to sponsor the translation of the first complete Bible in Rus' in 1499. On the Gennadii Bible, see Thomson, "Slavonic Translation," 655–665; and Cooper, *Slavic Scriptures*, 127–134.

[25] *AFED*, 313–315.

prison still others.[26] A few were sent back to Gennadii, who humiliated them in public.

By 1504 when the next heresy trial was conducted, Iosif Volotskii (1462–1515; founder of the Volokolamsk Monastery) had advanced to the fore in the fight against heresy. This time the most prominent among the heretics were executed by burning[27]—the first instance of formal execution of heretics in Rus'.[28] Ivan III had previously protected those involved with the heresy in Moscow, at least until the spring of 1502, when he agreed to their prosecution.[29]

Subsequent heresy trials and investigations involving meetings of church councils did not focus on any one type of heresy as did the councils of 1488, 1490, and 1504. Instead, the accusations of what particular heresy the accused person might be guilty differ in each case, and in some cases the exact nature of the heresy purportedly committed by the accused is unclear.

In 1525 Maksim Grek ("the Greek," 1475–1556) was brought to trial on both civil and ecclesiastical charges.[30] He was a monk who had been sent to Moscow in 1518 by the patriarch of Constantinople, Theoleptos I (1513–1522), in response to a request from Vasilii III (1505–1533) to the patriarch for someone to help with the translation of Greek books into Russian.[31] In the translation project, which involved not only Maksim Grek, but also Vlas and Dmitrii Gerasimov, Maksim translated from Greek into Latin and then Gerasimov and Vlas rendered Maksim's Latin into Russian.[32] The council accused Maksim of mistranslations into Russian, but, as he wrote later, Gerasimov and Vlas should have been the ones tried

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[26] *AFED*, 382–386. Ivan III showed up at the end of the proceedings while the council was still in session and asked that Metropolitan Zosima examine the canon laws in regard to punishing heretics. Ibid., 385.

[27] *PSRL*, 6, pt. 2 (2001): cols. 371–372; 8:244; 12: 258; 27:337.

[28] The *Novgorod IV Chronicle* reports in the entry for 1375 that three Strigol'niks were killed by being thrown off the bridge in Novgorod into the Volkhov River. *PSRL* 4, pt. 1 (2000): 305. But there is no indication in the *Chronicle* that their deaths were an official execution.

[29] *PIV*, 176.

[30] Pokrovskii, *Sudnye spiski*, 90–96, 140–146, 160–166.

[31] "Akty, kasaiushchiesia do priezda," 31–33.

[32] See Gerasimov's letter to Misiur' Munekhin in Gorskii, "Maksim Grek Sviatogorets," 190. Cf. Maksim Grek, *Sochineniia*, 1:32; and 2:316.

for what appeared in the Russian translation.[33] He was also accused of *lèse majesté* on account of remarks he had made and contacts he had, and charged with other crimes such as sorcery.

One of the accusations concerned Maksim's having questioned the consecration of the Rus' metropolitan without the approval of the patriarch, which indeed Maksim considered to be uncanonical.[34] Another accusation concerned a letter Maksim wrote to Vasilii III questioning his actions at the time of the Crimean Tatar siege of Moscow in 1521. Thus, Maksim seems to have been found guilty of being disagreeable and not recanting his own opinions rather than of any doctrinal heterodoxy. As a result of this first trial, he was imprisoned in the Volokolamsk Monastery and in 1531 was again brought to trial with many of the same charges lodged against him.[35] He was again found guilty and sentenced this time to imprisonment in the Tver' Otroch Monastery. Maksim's second trial may have been a prelude and lead-in to the trial of another target—the former boyar Vassian Patrikeev (fl. 1493– 1531).[36]

Our only source for the trial of Vassian Patrikeev at the 1531 Council is an incomplete report by Metropolitan Daniil (1522–1539) on the investigation of Vassian for heresy.[37] Since the last part of the trial record is missing, we do not know of what he was found guilty. We do know the outcome, however, meant imprisonment for him in the Volokolamsk Monastery. Since subsequent sources do not refer to Vassian Patrikeev, we may conclude he died there soon after the trial. In the trial record, Daniil asks Vassian: whether he believes certain individuals were miracle workers (Vassian replies he does not know); whether he referred to certain "miracle workers" (*chudotvortsy*) as "trouble makers" (*smutotvortsy*) because their monasteries had villages and people (Vassian replies that the Gospels do not authorize monasteries' keeping villages)[38];

[33] Maksim Grek, *Sochineniia*, 1:32.
[34] Maksim Grek, *Sochineniia*, 3:126.
[35] Pokrovskii, *Sudnye spiski*, 96–125, 146–159, 166–180.
[36] On this point, see Haney, *From Italy*, 84.
[37] "Predanie Daniila," 1–28; and Kazakova, *Vassian Patrikeev*, 215–318.
[38] In his *Slovo otvetno*, Vassian expresses the view that the bishops should be in charge of managing the lands of the monasteries. Nowhere in any of the writings reliably attributed to him does he argue that monasteries should give up their landholdings altogether or that lands should be taken

and whether he attempted to combine "Hellenic teaching" with the "holy rules" (Vassian replies he does not know to what Daniil is referring). None of these implied accusations represents a heresy as such. Daniil then launches into a monologue on heresies concerning Corpus Christi, during which our only copy of the trial record breaks off.

So our best guess is that Vassian may have been found guilty of some nonconformist belief concerning the relationship of the human to the divine natures of Christ, but a more likely explanation is he was imprisoned for the same reason as Maksim Grek—for expressing his own opinions and for not recanting those views when asked about them.

In February 1549, a council tried Isak Sobaka for heresy.[39] Isak had been formally charged and found guilty in 1531 in connection with the trials of Maksim and Vassian and excommunicated. Metropolitan Ioasaf (1539–1542) lifted the excommunication and appointed him first hegumen of the Simonov Monastery, then archimandrite of the Chudov Monastery. The same charges that had been raised in 1531 were leveled against him in 1549. Ultimately he was found guilty, not of heresy, but of illegally rising through the ecclesiastical ranks, since his excommunication in 1531 had not been officially rescinded by a church council. He was sent for punishment to the Nil Sorskii Pustyn' near Beloozero.

In November 1553, the state secretary Ivan Viskovatyi (?–1570) was found guilty of challenging the changes in icon painting that Metropolitan Makarii (1542–1563) had introduced[40] and that Viskovatyi deemed uncanonical. On 15 January 1554, after the decision of the council went against him, he withdrew his criticism. Apparently because he was willing to recant, he was not imprisoned. In December 1553, Artemii, the former hegumen of the Troitse-Sergiev Monastery (1551–1552), was found guilty of holding unspecified "Lutheran schismatic views,"[41] of demeaning the miracle-workers and their miracles, and of questioning the decisions of

away from them by the secular authorities. On this point, see Ostrowski, "Church Polemics," 363. See also Pliguzov, "Vstuplenie Vassiana Patrikeeva," 41–42; and Pliguzov, *Polemika v russkoi tserkvi*, 139.

[39] Pokrovskii, *Sudnye spiski*, 125–139.

[40] Bodianskii, "Rozysk," 37–40; and *AI*, 1:246–248.

[41] *AI*, 1:248–256.

the ecumenical councils.[42] He was imprisoned in Solovki Monastery, from where he escaped to Lithuania. In June 1554, Matvei Bashkin, Ivan Timofeevich Borisov, Grigorii Timofeevich Borisov, and others were found guilty of heresy.[43] They were accused, among other transgressions, of denying the divinity of Christ and were imprisoned. From other writings we know that Matvei was an abolitionist in regard to slavery, and such views may have sufficed to get him accused of heresy. These councils contribute nothing to Eastern Christian theological doctrine on heresies, but they do tell us a great deal about how Muscovite churchmen viewed the relationship of the ecclesiastical authority to the secular ruling authority—as co-partners in governing the realm.

Councils on Ecclesiastical Discipline and Reforms

The only council to address the issue of a prelate who was neither a metropolitan nor charged with heresy was the Council of 1509. The problem concerned the transfer by Iosif as hegumen of the Volokolamsk Monastery from the jurisdiction of the local prince, Fedor Borisovich (1476–1513), to Fedor's cousin, Grand Prince Vasilii III. Fedor had inherited the surrounding lands from his father, Boris Vasil'evich, co-founder and patron of the Iosifo-Volokolamsk Monastery. Although no canon law existed justifying the right of the patron to consider such a monastery his property, it was not uncommon for a lord to do so. Iosif sought relief from Fedor's demands for portions of the monastery's movable property and revenues by asking Vasilii III to take over the patronage of the cloister, and Vasilii agreed. This move, however, aroused the ire of Serapion, the archbishop of Novgorod (1506–1509), because Volokolamsk rested within his jurisdiction and he was not consulted about the change so Serapion excommunicated Iosif. Metropolitan Simon (1495–1511) convoked a council to discuss the issue and declared that Serapion was in violation of canon law, deposed him from his see, voided the excommunication of Iosif, and excommunicated Serapion in turn.[44] Besides rejecting the

[42] *PSRL*, 13:233.
[43] *PSRL*, 13:232; and Bodianskii, "Moskovskie sobory," 1–2.
[44] *AI*, 1:529–530, no. 290; *Ioasafovskaia letopis'*, 155–156; and *PIV*, 224–226, 329.

principle of a local lord's ownership of a monastery, the Council of 1509 was noteworthy for a number of reasons, including the invocation of the principle that a ruler's decision not be condemned publicly (apparently Serapion had delivered sermons denouncing Vasilii's decision) and a pre-1547 use of the term *tsar'* (from the Latin 'caesar') to apply to the Muscovite grand prince.

The two main church councils that made decisions on matters of ecclesiastical reforms and procedure during this period were the Council of 1503 and the Stoglav Council of 1551, although other councils dealt with specific questions of practice. The 1503 Council's decisions included forbidding the payment of fees for the placement of priests and deacons, establishing the minimum age for clerics, prohibiting a priest from celebrating mass while drunk or on the day after being drunk, stipulating that widowed priests must enter a monastery, and forbidding monks and nuns from living in the same monastery.[45] The prohibition against taking fees for clerical placement appears to have been in response to heretics' claims that fees were uncanonical.

The stipulation of a specific fee for placement was common practice in both the Eastern and Western churches and justified by both civil and ecclesiastical laws.[46] Nonetheless, the council decision against continuing to take them was used to depose Archbishop Gennadii of Novgorod in 1504.[47] Although Gennadii signed the council decision, he may still have considered the criticism of taking fees to be a sign of heresy. Soon after, however, this decision was dropped. The Stoglav, for example, does not mention this particular decision although it incorporates the other decisions of the 1503 Council.[48]

The issue of secularization of church and monastic lands has been traditionally associated with the 1503 Council, but that association is based on faulty and unreliable polemical sources of the mid-16th century. There is no contemporary or reliable evidence

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[45] *AAE*, 1:484–487, nos. 382 and 383a; Ostrowski, "'Fontological' Investigation," 517–547; and *RFA*, 3:658–662.

[46] Macrides, "Simony," 1901–1902. See also Pliguzov, "Archbishop Gennadii," 283 n. 6.

[47] *PSRL* 6, part 2: col. 371; 8:244; 12:258; 27:337; and *Ioasafovskaia letopis'*, 146.

[48] Emchenko, *Stoglav*, 385–390, chaps. 80, 82, and 83.

that discusses such an occurrence at the council. And there is no clear or reliable evidence that Ivan III planned in any way to extend his extensive confiscation of church and monastic lands in Novgorod to the rest of Muscovy.[49] The idea of attaching the secularization question to the Council of 1503 may have derived from the Stoglav itself. In chapter 100 of that council's decision (written in 1551), former Metropolitan Ioasaf (1539–1542) tells Ivan IV to ask the older boyars who were present at the widower priests' council who else was also present at that council besides Iosif Volotskii. Although Ioasaf was clearly referring to the 1503 Council, he was not referring to the church and monastic lands issue. Nonetheless, it took only one short step to connect that issue, which was discussed at the 1551 Council, with the 1503 Council, where it probably had not been discussed, and to make Iosif Volotskii the defender of church and monastic landholding, although we have nothing that he wrote on the subject.

During January and February 1551, Metropolitan Makarii presided with Ivan over the Stoglav Church Council, which codified the regulations of the church. The decisions covered a wide range of topics, including attempts to make uniform ritual practices as well as income of monasteries and secular clergy, prescriptions to raise the educational and moral level of the clergy, and stipulations that church authorities control the work performed by scribes, icon painters, and others in the service of the church.[50] This ecclesiastical codification was similar to the codification of government laws in the *Sudebnik* the previous year.[51] Because some of the decisions of the Stoglav were not completely in accordance with Eastern Church canon laws, a number of historians have seen the Stoglav decisions as representing a break with the Byzantine Church.[52] Yet, as Jack Kollmann concludes, "the *Stoglav* fathers

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[49] See Ostrowski, "'Fontological' Investigation"; and Ostrowski, "500 let spustia," 211–236.

[50] Emchenko, *Stoglav*, 232–416.

[51] *Sudebniki XV–XVI vekov*, 109–340.

[52] The latest restatement of this view can be found in Pavlov and Perrie, *Ivan the Terrible*, 68. The authors cite the decision in favor of two alleluias (instead of three) during the church service and of making the sign of the cross with two fingers (instead of three fingers), as practiced by the more "canonically correct" Novgorod Church.

did not definitively and fundamentally reassess canonical tradition—rather, they merely repeated currently preferred formulas from books at hand."[53] In other words, their intent was not to overthrow or ignore the Byzantine Church canon, but to follow it.

Evidential support for Kollmann's contention can be found in the Stoglav's rationale for two, instead of three, alleluias. The Stoglav fathers say they reached their decision on the basis of the *Life of St. Efrosin of Pskov*, in which "the Immaculate Birth-Giver of God [Prechistiia Bogoroditsa] revealed her prohibition of the triple alleluia and ordered Orthodox Christians to say the double alleluia... ."[54] The *vita* they cite had been written only four years earlier about Efrosin's revelation.[55] Rather than a flouting of the "correct" canons of Byzantium and Novgorod, we can imagine they thought they had received the latest "correct" word on the subject, and were not associating "incorrectness" with either Byzantium or Novgorod. After the Muscovite patriarchate was established in 1589, and learned Greeks from Constantinople came to instruct the Muscovite prelates on proper procedures, the triple alleluia was restored to church service books.[56] The Council of 1666–1667 officially confirmed the triple alleluia. Similarly, the decision in favor of the two-fingered sign of the cross was made on the basis of two works, the *Instruction (Nastavlenie) of Theodoret* (fl. sixth c.) and a *Tale concerning Meletius of Antioch* (fl. fourth c.).[57] Both works were found in two redactions, the earlier of which indicated three fingers and the later, two. The Stoglav participants thus had their choice of two apparently equal traditions and, as with the double alleluia, chose the more recent one. When the Muscovite prelates realized their decision was not in accordance with Byzantine canon, they reversed their stand and

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[53] Kollmann, "Moscow *Stoglav*," 305.

[54] Emchenko, *Stoglav*, chap. 42, p. 319.

[55] Makarii, *Istoriia russkogo raskola*, 32–37. The *Regulation* or *Statute of the Spiritual College* of 1721 cites this case as an example of faulty use of evidence. See *Spiritual Regulation of Peter the Great*, 13–14.

[56] See Makarii, *Istoriia russkogo raskola*, 55n109, for examples of church books that had restored the triple alleluia from as early as 1590.

[57] Emchenko, *Stoglav*, chap. 31, pp. 290–293. For the identification of the *Instruction* and the *Tale*, see Makarii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, 8:94–124; and Makarii, *Istoriia russkogo raskola*, 25–30, 59–62. Cf. Golubinskii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, 2, pt. 2:477–478.

at the Council of 1666–1667 opted for the three-fingered sign of the cross.

Kollmann has suggested that "[a] contributing cause of . . . [the Stoglav's] ineffectiveness" in the decisions concerning such matters as the formulaic beginning of the divine liturgy, the restriction to one godparent, the setting of a minimum age for marriage, two alleluias, the two-fingered sign of the cross, and so forth indicated the inability of the council participants to determine "good translations" of service books—that is, those that were in accord with canon law.[58] Given diverse traditions and differing evidence on the same issue, the Rus' Church leaders made the best decision they could in each case. Without access to Byzantine canon law as it existed in Constantinople at the time, they could not have been intentionally deciding in opposition to that canon law. Although they did have access to the compilations of canon law called *Kormchie knigi* (lit., *Pilot books*), these books either did not address the issues they were dealing with or provided ambiguous answers open to differing interpretations when confronting those concerns. While the Stoglav prelates were attempting to confirm Eastern Church canon law and previous council decisions, their knowledge of that canon law was limited and at times incorrect.

Other councils on ecclesiastical discipline and reform during this period dealt with matters of procedures and practices specific to the Rus' Church rather than matters of canon law, which the councils of 1503 and 1551 engaged. The councils of 1547 and 1549 are regarded as having established a number of new Rus' saints, but our sources for these councils are not in complete agreement.[59] The four known manuscript copies that provide a list of saints canonized at the 1547 Council are of metropolitan letters to various eparchies describing the decision of the council. Although a group of names is common to all four lists, none of the lists completely coincides with any of the others. Our evidence for a canonization council of 1549 is an oblique reference in Ivan IV's questions to the Stoglav,[60] and this has led to the supposition that the

[58] Kollmann, "Moscow *Stoglav*," 305.
[59] Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, 80–85.
[60] Emchenko, *Stoglav*, 250–253.

canonization council was the same one that tried Isak Sobaka in February of that year.[61]

The Council of 1555 established the archiepiscopal see of Kazan'.[62] The Khanate of Kazan' had been taken by Muscovite forces two-and-a-half years earlier in 1552. The importance of this conquest is reflected in the special investiture of a new archbishop for Kazan', only the third in the Rus' Church, after Novgorod and Rostov, but ranked above Rostov. When the patriarchate of Moscow was established in 1589, the archbishop of Kazan' was elevated to metropolitan.

The Council of 1564, which was called to choose a successor to Metropolitan Makarii, also discussed other matters, including who among the prelates was allowed to wear the white cowl. According to Herberstein, only the Novgorod archbishop wore a white cowl in the first quarter of the 16th century.[63] The members of the 1564 Church Council declared nothing had been written concerning why the archbishops of Novgorod had worn a white cowl.[64] This declaration creates a problem for those scholars who believe the *Tale of the White Cowl*, which justifies the wearing of that cowl by Novgorod archbishops, was composed in the 1490s. The church historian Makarii described the problem of the date of the composition of the *Tale of the White Cowl*: "From this it is possible to conclude that either the tale of Dmitrii the Translator about the white cowl was merely unknown to the fathers of the council, although it existed, remaining from the time of Gennadii in the archive of the Novgorod archbishop, or it still did not exist at

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[61] See, e. g., Makarii, "Tserkovnyi sobor 1549 goda," 145; also in Makarii, *Zhizn' i trudy sviatitelia Makariia*, 116. An interpolated list into the third redaction of the *Life of Iona* contains 16 "later new saints" (Lur'e, "Zhitie Iony," 273), leading scholars to assume these were the additional saints approved in 1549.

[62] *PSRL*, 13:249–251; cf. *AAE*, 1:257–262, no. 241.

[63] Herberstein, *Rerum Moscoviticarum Commentarii*, 119.

[64] Makarii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, 7:235–236; Kostomarov, "Povest'," 301; Pavlov, "Podlozhnaia darstvennaia gramota," 49; Sedel'nikov, "Vasilij Kalika," 235n1; Stremooukhoff, "La tiare," 128; Lur'e, *Ideologicheskaia bor'ba*, 230; Thomson, "Intellectual Difference," 80–81; and Ostrowski, *Muscovy and the Mongols*, 236. For the *Council Decision*, see *AI*, vol. 1, no. 173: 331–333; and *PSRL*, 13:378–380.

that time, but was composed by someone using the name Dmitrii after the council."[65] Although Makarii accepted an early date of composition of the *Tale*, he made no attempt to argue in favor of the ignorance of the prelates of an already existing text. Most scholars who believe in an early date for the composition of the *Tale* have tended to disregard the testimony of the church council decision.[66]

It is unlikely that all the church prelates who participated in the 1564 Church Council, including Pimen, the Archbishop of Novgorod (1551–1572), would not have known of the *Tale* if it already existed. It is also unlikely that the 16th-century Metropolitan Makarii, who had been archbishop of Novgorod, would have excluded the *Tale* from his compilation of the *Velikie Chet'i minei* (*Great Menology*) if it had been written by ca. 1550, the time when the expanded version was completed. While possible that the members of the Council of 1564 and Metropolitan Makarii overlooked an already existing written work on the white cowl, the likely explanation for their not mentioning it is that the *Tale* had not yet been written.[67]

The Council of 1564 also issued, on 20 February, rules and procedures regarding the consecration of a metropolitan.[68] In July 1570, a council met to depose Pimen, archbishop of Novgorod, at the behest of Ivan IV.[69] On 29 April 1572, the council that was called to choose Metropolitan Kirill's successor also approved the fourth marriage of Ivan IV.[70] The council had to provide its approval for the marriage to be considered legal, since there was no canon law regarding a fourth marriage, and there is some dispute

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[65] Makarii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, 7:236.

[66] Labunka mentions the council decision but adopts the position that the council members were unaware of the *Tale*'s existence. Labunka, *Legend* (1978), 128; Labunka, *Legend* (1998), 72. Ternovskii suggested that the council members were not ignorant of the *Tale* but thought it too questionable to acknowledge. Ternovskii, *Izuchenie*, 2: 172. Thomson argued, however, that it would have been equally as easy for the council members to condemn the work as to pretend it did not exist. Thomson, "Intellectual Difference," 81n121.

[67] Ostrowski, "Ironies," 43–44.

[68] *AAE*, 1:297–300.

[69] *DDG*, 483.

[70] *AAE*, 1:329–332.

concerning whether canon law even applies to a third marriage.[71] The council members apparently realized they were in canonically uncharted territory. In return for granting their approval, they placed a penance on Ivan for three years as a result of his "weakness for the passions." The first year he was not allowed to take communion or enter the nave of any church, with both restrictions being reduced proportionately during the next two years.[72] This decision is one more example of the Rus' Church prelates' doing their best to reach decisions in conformity with Byzantine canon law, but not always succeeding. Rather than continue to act in opposition to that canon law, they changed their decisions to be in conformity. When canon law provided little or no guidance, they tried to make determinations in a procedurally correct way.

Councils on *Tarkhan* and Monastic Acquisition of *Votchiny*

The issue of monastic acquisition of *votchiny* (patrimonies—sing. *votchina*) was discussed at three church councils: 1551, 1572, and 1580. At stake was the state's regulation of monasteries. The Stoglav Council declared that:

> a monastery's treasury and all the material resources of monasteries will be under the authority of the tsar's and grand prince's majordomos (*dvoretskie*), who will be sent to the archimandrites, hegumens, priors, and council elders of each monastery to audit, to take inventory, and to make remittances according to the books.[73]

The *Judgment of 11 May 1551*, which was attached to the Stoglav decision, decreed the following:

> (1) the sale or donation of a *votchina* to a church or a monastery without a report (*doklad*) to the sovereign is forbidden, otherwise the *votchina* is subject to confiscation by the sovereign;
>
> (2) any *pomest'e* or taxable lot that a bishop or monastery has acquired as the result of debts of the holder is to be returned, after due process, to its former holder;

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[71] *Rudder*, 836–837.

[72] For a discussion of this council's decision, see Martin, *Tsar,* 138–139.

[73] Emchenko, *Stoglav*, 333, chapter 49. Translation based on Kolmann, "Moscow *Stoglav*," 422.

> (3) any village or arable land given by a boyar after the death of Vasilii III (1533) is to be returned to its former holder;
>
> (4) any *votchina* given for repose of the soul (*po dushu*) is to remain with the monastery except for those lands that had been forbidden under Vasilii III, which are to revert to the sovereign.[74]

It seems as though the church and state authorities were trying to work out a formula such that church and monastic landholding and acquisitions were protected while also safeguarding the interests of the state.

On 9 October 1572, a council attended by prelates and boyars further stipulated restrictions and the conditions under which *votchiny* could be given to monasteries. A *votchina* that had been granted to a boyar by the sovereign could not be donated to a monastery. Council members also made the following determination: "*Votchiny* are not to be donated to large monasteries, which have many *votchiny*," but they could be donated to small monasteries that had little land, as long as those donations were registered with the Pomestnyi Chancellery. A *votchina* that was to be otherwise bequeathed did not have to be registered in the Pomestnyi Chancellery as long as it went to "kith and kin" (*rodu i plemiani*) who could serve the tsar, "so that the land will not leave from service."[75] This decision has generally been interpreted as the state's limiting the monasteries' acquisition of lands, but the careful wording of the document indicates a compromise arrived at by prelates and boyars that would both protect monastic land acquisitions and prevent the loss of *votchina* lands from providing support for military service.

The 1580 Council determined that *votchinniki* (patrimony owners) were not to give their *votchiny* to monasteries for repose of the soul (*po dushu*) but were to give money instead. Also the monasteries were not to acquire land through purchase or mortgage without the knowledge (*vedom*) of the sovereign.[76] The wording of the decision has led historians to conclude that this decision was intended to end monastic acquisition of lands altogether. The decision was, thus, seen as a "victory" of the state over the church because, presumably, that land would then be

[74] Emchenko, *Stoglav*, 413–416.
[75] *AI*, 1:270.
[76] *SGGD*, 1:583–587; and *AAE*, 1:372–373 (incomplete).

available to the state. If that had been the case, then the continued increase in monastic landholding throughout the 1580s (although at a much lower rate than before)[77] seems to suggest the decision of this council was to a certain extent ignored.

A better explanation for the decision emerges when one realizes that the disagreement between the state and church during the preceding 30 years was not over whether churches and monasteries should have lands or even acquire lands but over registering these land acquisitions with the secular record-keeping administration and the secular authority's right to regulate which lands could be donated. The articulation by churchmen of the inalienability of church and monastic lands most likely arose as a reaction to attempts by the secular administration to monitor all land donations to monasteries. One of the earliest extant sources to this effect is a document dated 1535, which demands from the Glushitsa Monastery a list of all *votchiny* recently acquired and warns the monastery against acquiring any more lands without the knowledge of the grand prince (*bez nashego vedoma*).[78] But it is only in the Judgment of 11 May 1551 that we find the punitive stipulation of confiscation of *votchiny* that had been donated or sold to any monastery without a report (*doklad*) to the state. Subsequent acts in 1557, 1562, and 1572 further defined under what conditions, and in what districts, lands could and could not be legally acquired by monasteries.[79] It was exactly during this period—when the state was legalizing through statutes the right to confiscate monastic and church lands, the transfer of which had not been previously registered—that we find the compilation by churchmen of a package of precedents, including the *Donation of Constantine*, the *Statute (Ustav) of Vladimir*, and the spurious *Iarlyk of Khan Uzbek to Metropolitan Peter*, concerning the churches' and monasteries' right to keep their lands. Associated with the formulation of precedents were the compositions of the first sources to describe the proposal of secularization as having been brought

[77] Veselovskii, "Monastyrskoe zemlevladenie," 101. According to Veselovskii's figures, from 1552 to 1579, monasteries acquired an average of 21.6 landholdings a year. From 1580 to 1590, the average is 4.3 landholdings per year.

[78] Amvrosii, *Istoriia*, 3:712–714.

[79] *AI*, 1:258–260 (1557); 1:268–270 (1562); and 1:270 (1572).

up and defeated at the 1503 Church Council. The state was pursuing administrative regulation of monastic land acquisition and instituting the penalty of confiscation for non-compliance, and churchmen were responding with arguments and precedents, some falsified, denying the state the right to confiscate any church or monastic lands.[80]

In the state sources, we find no indication of any plans to secularize church and monastic lands at all. Indeed, we continue to find throughout this period evidence of donations of land to the monasteries by the grand princes and the ruling family and the return to monasteries of lands confiscated by local officials. Such donations and returns make little sense if the ruler was planning to secularize those same lands later.

Thus, the decision of the 1580 Council should be seen as a compromise between the church leaders and the secular record-keepers. Such a conclusion is supported by the very wording of the reason given for the decision: "in order that the churches of God and holy places will be without turmoil, and that the military forces may be armed more strongly for the battle against the enemies of the cross of Christ."[81] The decision itself expressly allowed the churches and monasteries to keep all the lands they had as of 15 January 1580 (the day of the decision). Those lands were not subject to confiscation by the state authorities for any reason. Thus, the church removed those lands already acquired from jeopardy of confiscation. In return, the churches and monasteries agreed to register their land acquisitions from that day on and to abide by the limitation on acquisition of *votchiny*. The dispute was thereby resolved.

The Council of 1584 prohibited monasteries from receiving *tarkhan* immunities, which were exemptions from taxes.[82] Historians have tended to see this decision, too, as a limitation imposed by the state on the church. Yet, certain considerations speak against such an interpretation. First, the Judgment of 11 May 1551 had already banned the issuing of *tarkhan* to monasteries. So, the council decision of 1584 merely confirms what had become church law. Second, Metropolitan Makarii wrote in favor of prohibiting *tarkhan* in 1551. Third, there was no objection on the part of the

[80] Ostrowski, "Church Polemics," 373–375.
[81] *SGGD*, 1:585.
[82] *SGGD*, 1:592–598, no. 202.

church to the prohibiting of *tarkhan* immunities being granted to monasteries either in 1551 or 1584. Finally, there may have been an advantage, as Kashtanov has suggested, for those who had received *tarkhan* immunities to be rid of them.[83] In the end, we do not know why the church was in favor of ending *tarkhan*, but clearly this decision was in no way disfavored or opposed by the church.

Council on the Establishment of the Moscow Patriarchate

On 23 January 1589, a church council met to choose Moscow's first patriarch from a list of three candidates: Metropolitan Iov (1587–1589, then patriarch of Moscow to 1607), Archbishop Aleksandr of Novgorod (1576–1589, then metropolitan of Novgorod to 1591), and Archbishop Varlaam of Rostov (1586–1603).[84] The election was a formality because all the parties involved, including Patriarch Jeremiah of Constantinople, had already agreed upon Iov. The procedure, however, did follow Eastern Church practice of choosing a patriarch from among three candidates. For his part, Jeremiah had agreed only six days earlier to support the elevation of Iov following a proposal sent to him from Tsar Fedor (1584–1598).[85] Jeremiah and his entourage had been held virtual prisoners in Moscow since their arrival six months earlier on 13 July 1588. They had come seeking contributions from the Muscovite ruler; those around Tsar Fedor were willing to donate alms provided Jeremiah agreed to the creation of a patriarchate in Moscow. At first, Jeremiah had refused to sanction the elevation of the Moscow metropolitan to patriarch. Then the Muscovites suggested that Jeremiah stay as patriarch of Rus', to which Jeremiah initially agreed. But when he was told that he would have to reside in Vladimir, not Moscow, he declined. Pseudo-Dorotheos (most likely, the Metropolitan of Monemvasia), who accompanied Jeremiah and who wrote an account of the negotiations, considered the stipulation that Jeremiah reside in Vladimir to be a ploy pressuring Jeremiah to agree to a Rus' patriarch.[86] However, if Jeremiah had

[83] Kashtanov, "Centralised State," 251.
[84] *SGGD*, 2:95–103.
[85] *Posol'skaia kniga*, 39.
[86] Sathas, *Viographikon schediasma*, Appendix, 21–22; and Gudziak, *Crisis and Reform*, 261–262.

stayed in Muscovite lands as patriarch, his residence could not have been Moscow, at least officially, unless they were willing to depose Iov as metropolitan.

In the end, Jeremiah performed his role in the ritual elevating Iov, and he signed the decree creating the Moscow patriarchate without understanding what it said; it was written in Russian (a language neither he nor anyone in his entourage could read) and no Greek translation was made available to him.[87] The success in getting Jeremiah to agree to the creation of a Moscow patriarchate and the elevation of Metropolitan Iov to that position represented the ultimate justification of the path on which the Rus' bishops put their church in 1448 when they chose and consecrated their own metropolitan. It also represented the culminating point of church-state cooperation in Muscovy during the 15th and 16th centuries. Iov and the Holy Synod hardly could have coerced the patriarch of Constantinople into agreeing to the creation of a Moscow patriarch, but the state authorities could do so by the simple expedient of not allowing Jeremiah to leave until he did so. By supporting the council of Rus' bishops, the secular ruling elite acquired for Muscovy the prestige of having one of the five patriarchs of the Eastern Church and the only one not under Ottoman rule.

Conclusion

The period from 1447 to 1589 stands as an important one for the genesis and development of an independent Russian Church and the role of the councils was immensely significant in guiding that development. At the beginning of this period, the Rus' bishops decided the Rus' Church had to go its own way after the ouster of the Constantinople-appointed Uniate metropolitan Isidor in 1441. In 1447, the bishops obtained the acquiescence of Grand Prince Vasilii II to choose and consecrate their own metropolitan in return for their support of him in the succession struggle with his cousin Dmitrii Shemiaka. And in 1448, they chose one of their own, Iona, to be installed in that position. Subsequent councils dealt with problems of heretics, of internal ecclesiastical discipline, and of *votchina* donations to the monasteries.

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[87] Sathas, *Viographikon schediasma*, Appendix, 22; and Gudziak, *Crisis and Reform*, 262.

Almost all the practices and formulations of the Russian Church during the 15th and 16th centuries, as declared by the councils, were firmly situated within the already well-accepted doctrines of the Eastern Church. Upon examining such issues as heresy, church factional struggles and polemics, the relationship between secular and ecclesiastical authorities, issues of iconography and church decoration, and the relationship of the Novgorod archiepiscopal see with the Moscow metropolitanate, one finds, instead of ad hoc doctrines and practices manufactured to address issues unique to Muscovy, an adoption, whenever possible, of pre-existing doctrines and practices that the Muscovite Church had inherited from the Greek Church. When the Rus, Church found itself out of step with the Greek Church, as in the case of prohibiting fees, handed down at the 1503 Church Council, the double alleluia, and two-fingered sign of the cross, it reversed itself to once again be in accord with Constantinople. In those cases where the Muscovite Church prelates were responding to issues that were indigenous to Rus' conditions, such as *votchina* donations, abolishing of *tarkhan*, and the autonomous standing of the Rus' Church, the Rus' bishops reached their decisions according to the procedures established by the Greek Church. Even the practice of trying someone for heresy where their only "crime" was expressing opinions opposed to secular government policy had its antecedents in Byzantium. Throughout this period, relations between the church and the state, while not always harmonious, were essentially cooperative and beneficial to both sides.

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CULTURAL DIVERSITY, IMPERIAL STRATEGIES, AND THE ISSUE OF FAITH:

RELIGIOUS TOLERATION IN EARLY MODERN RUSSIA IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Maria Salomon Arel

Since the 15th century, Western Europeans had been coming to Russia in ever-larger numbers to do battle for Muscovy, to trade, or to serve the tsar at court or in his administration. In the first half of the 17th century, in the decades following the Time of Troubles, as the state embarked on a substantial, Western-inspired reform of the military and the economy rebounded and diversified, the flow of Europeans grew stronger and the alien resident population mushroomed, especially in Moscow, the heart of the realm.[1] As wary as it might have been about allowing growing numbers of foreigners to settle in the country, the Muscovite state ultimately welcomed their presence and even facilitated it through various incentives. It is clear that those formulating state policy believed

[1] One estimate places the Lutheran/Calvinist foreign population in Moscow at one thousand men, not including their families, in the 1630s. A more complete figure, counting Anglicans, Catholics, and possibly others is unavailable, as is a total for those foreigners who resided in the provinces, many of them in the tsar's military. The latter alone appear to have numbered some several thousand by the end of the 16th century. See Tsvetaev, *Protestantstvo,* 246–250; and Baron, "Moscow's *Nemeckaja Sloboda*," 2.

Tapestry of Russian Christianity: Studies in History and Culture. Nickolas Lupinin, Donald Ostrowski and Jennifer B. Spock, eds. Columbus, Ohio: Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures and the Resource Center for Medieval Slavic Studies, The Ohio State University, 2016, 157–186.

that the potential risks—to national security, popular order and morality, and Church-state relations—associated with allowing foreigners to live in Russia among Russians and to enter and exit the country on business were outweighed by the benefits they brought with them: specie for a treasury totally dependent on outside sources; capital, entrepreneurial skills and techniques; and commercial networks that could help stimulate Russian trade, boost customs revenues, provide technological know-how in developing new products, mining, metallurgy and weapons manufacture, military skills and manpower, scientific knowledge, languages, etc.[2] Sustained Muscovite awareness of Russia's shortcomings in these areas and its need to improve if it were to increase its strength geopolitically (versus Poland and Sweden in the west and the Ottomans in the south) fueled the "first" wave (i.e., pre-Petrine) of Western European migration to Russia.

Muscovy was not alone in recognizing that foreigners could make important contributions to its state power. The world over, throughout the ages, from Europe to Asia, rulers have sought to use outsiders to better promote their interests. In return, they have granted these strangers rewards to anchor and nurture the relationship. Beyond remuneration and other material incentives, those who lived and worked in foreign lands were most concerned about two core issues. First, how, by whom, and according to which law they would be judged in disputes, and second, the extent to which they could practice their religious beliefs—concerns essentially about the safety of body and soul. On the question of religious liberty, in the 16th and 17th centuries, the policies adopted in various settings show a clear dichotomy between East and West, with Ottoman, Mughal, and Southeast Asian rulers displaying a more accommodating inclination, while Western European states generally exhibited a rigid, often aggressive drive towards uniformity in the religious sphere.

The Muscovite stance on the issue vis-à-vis Western Europeans can be situated somewhere in the middle of this spectrum, less liberal than the Eastern model, but considerably more tolerant than was the norm in the West in the period. Although the latter

[2] Some useful discussions and assessments of the role of Western Europeans in Muscovite Russia are provided by: Lappo-Danilveskii, "Inozemtsy"; Pypin, "Inozemtsy"; Tsvetaev, *Protestantstvo*; Muliukin, *Priezd inostrantsev*; Platonov, *Moskva i zapad*; Esper, "Military Self-Sufficiency"; Phipps, *Britons*; and Fuhrmann, *Capitalism in Russia*.

point is not entirely new, it has not been the subject of much reflection, and certainly not of any broad comparative discussion. Rather, it has been buried under numerous, often disparaging depictions of Muscovy, by contemporaries and scholars alike, as a den of xenophobia. While not denying that 16th- and 17th-century Muscovites were ethnocentric, probably xenophobic (at least in the decades following the Time of Troubles, when the scars left by invading Polish Catholic and Protestant Swedish armies and the Polish occupation of Moscow had yet to fade), this study shifts the analysis away from popular attitudes that are difficult to trace, to state policies, which are not only more accessible to the historian, but also the single most important force in setting the parameters of religious expression and practice for foreign communities in Russia. These parameters were relatively wide because the particular ethno-cultural space that made up early modern Russia and the perceptions that formed around it, coupled with the exigencies of state building in an imperial setting combined to favor a pragmatic and flexible approach to the religious question.

Ethnocentrism and Xenophobia: Muscovite and Other

> You strangers that inhabit this land!
> Note this same writing, do it understand;
> Conceive it well, for safety of your lives,
> Your goods, your children, and your dearest wives.[3]

One can well imagine the chilling effect these non-too-subtle threats must have had on those who first saw them affixed one morning to the front gate of their church, back in the early 1590s. The place was not Moscow, but London, and the church belonged to a Dutch parish, by far the largest resident alien community in the English capital at the time. London was also home in this period to a sizeable French community, which, like the Dutch, was often the target of insult and abuse, including daily harassment in the streets, at the hands of the English. The Archbishop of Canterbury bemoaned the behavior of his flock, lamenting Londoners' habit of referring to resident Frenchmen and their kin as "French dogs," while another contemporary rebuked his fellows for the "inveterate fierceness and cankered malice" they held for foreigners living in their midst.[4] Blunt warnings of violence, verbal

[3] Yungblut, *Strangers,* 42.
[4] Yungblut, *Strangers*, 12, 43–44.

harassment, and dishonest business tactics aimed at hurting the livelihood of those not English were common occurrences in the daily lives of resident aliens in Elizabethan England. In the early 17th century, the situation was not much improved, the chaplain of the Venetian ambassador in London observing that foreigners were well-advised "to avoid strangeness in dress" lest they fall prey to the hostility of officials and tradesmen who were "apt to ill-treat and rob them."[5]

By the time the good chaplain penned his remarks, the English had long been perceived by their continental brethren as ethnocentric, prone to flaunting their superiority vis-à-vis other peoples and states, sometimes veering into outright xenophobia. Foreigners commented "with almost monotonous regularity" on the intense English dislike of outsiders, describing them as "inimical to strangers," "great lovers of themselves . . . [who believe] that there [is] no people equal to them and no other world but England." One Italian observer noted disapprovingly that "they have an antipathy of foreigners and imagine they never come into their island but to make themselves masters of it, and to usurp their goods."[6] No doubt, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Austrians, Venetians, Florentines, Dutchmen, and other Europeans displayed their own brands of self-satisfaction and insularity, viewing themselves in the most shining of lights, while looking down on others with distaste ranging from mild condescension to suspicious hostility.

So, apparently, did the Muscovites. While 19th- and early 20th-century anthropologists and sociologists were honing their understanding and definition of "ethnocentrism" and "xenophobia," historians of Russia were busy writing about, among other related topics, the negative attitude of Muscovites towards foreigners and all things foreign. In the works of these scholars, Russia in the 16th and 17th centuries was depicted as a place where people at all levels of society were "wary" and "suspicious" of foreigners, "intolerant" of the non-Russian and non-Orthodox, "unwelcoming," "highly distrustful," and even "hostile" to anything or anyone from "the outside." Russians supposedly "hated" foreigners, whom they sometimes referred to as "dogs" or "snakes," refusing to have any physical contact with them or to enter their homes.[7]

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[5] Yungblut, *Strangers*, 47.

[6] Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities*, 1; and Yungblut, *Strangers*, 47.

[7] See, for instance, Pypin, "Inozemtsy," 55–256; Tsvetaev, *Protestantstvo,* 329–334, 341; and Liubimenko, *Istoriia torgovykh snoshenii,* 62–63, 131.

Foreign visitors to Russia in the period provided much of the material for these assessments. Sixteenth-century accounts, for instance those penned by Ulfeldt (1575) or Possevino (1586), contain many references to Muscovites shunning contact with foreigners. Similar observations were made in subsequent works as late as the turn of the 18th century. Petrejus, writing in 1615, noted the "pride" of the Muscovites and the low view they held of "others," while a few decades later, Olearius described a people that regarded itself as superior.[8]

Foreigners who described Muscovites as self-important, proud, and contemptuous of others attributed these sentiments to a sense of religious superiority: the belief, in fact ardent conviction, that Orthodoxy was the one true faith and its adherents the only real Christians. Catholics were, at best, "besprinkled Christians" and, at worst, along with everyone else who was not Orthodox (Protestants, Muslims, Jews, and non-Christians) "unclean" and "sinful," "heretics" or "heathens." According to certain observers, Muscovites were especially scornful and intolerant of Catholics, which some believed stemmed from the influence of the Byzantine/Greek Orthodox tradition,[9] as well as Jews, whom the Russian clergy referred to as the "killers of Christ."[10] Historians have observed that, for Muscovites, being Russian was synonymous with being Orthodox. One could not be of another faith, whether Christian or non-Christian, and be Russian. Command of the Russian language, the wearing of Russian dress, a physiognomy similar to that of Russians, or even an oath of loyalty to the tsar—none were sufficient to "make" one a Russian, only adherence to the Russian Orthodox religion.[11] Conversely, a person of non-Russian origin or physiognomy who barely spoke Russian or did so poorly, was considered Russian if he/she was Russian Orthodox, even if only in name. If ethnocentrism "is really the sentiment of patriotism in all its philosophic fullness ... in both its rationality and its extravagant exaggeration,"[12] then, by believing and declaring their religion to be "the best," Muscovites were simply being patriotic, waving the flag, so to speak. Pride in the Orthodox faith and,

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[8] Poe, *"Born to Slavery,"* 46; Petrejus, discussed in Birgegard, *Sparwenfeld's Diary*, 264; and Baron, *Travels of Olearius*, 232.
[9] Fletcher, *Russe Commonwealth*, 94.
[10] Poe, "*Born to Slavery*," 46; Baron, *Travels of Olearius*, 277, 282; and Dunning, *Grand Duchy,* 123.
[11] Tsvetaev, *Protestantstvo*, 341; and Slezkine, *Arctic Mirrors,* 42–43.
[12] Sumner, *War*, 12.

conversely, the belittling of other religions, was for Russians in the 16th and 17th centuries pride in Russia, in being Russian, and in being the subjects of the mighty Russian tsar, even if these sentiments were not articulated or even perceived as such.

In a recent discussion of Russian attitudes towards foreigners in the early modern period, Lindsey Hughes correctly, and refreshingly, cautioned that the negative Russian perception of outsiders needs "to be viewed in a comparative perspective." As I have done here, Hughes also used the case of the English, usually depicted as a sensible and progressive-minded people, to make her point. "Englishness," in this era, was suffused with xenophobia, hatred of Catholics, the Scots and the French, displaying, as Linda Colley has brilliantly revealed, "a vast superstructure of prejudice."[13] So what do we make of the Muscovites, the English, and others so fond of themselves? It seems that we should not be too harsh in our assessment, however offended our modern sensibilities might be by such overt displays of cultural smugness. The work of sociobiologists has persuasively shown that ethnocentric tendencies, prejudices, and xenophobia appear to be universal. They occur to some degree or another in all cultures, although the specific content and articulation of these attitudes differs from one group to another and within the same group over time, depending on socio-economic and political circumstances. Simply put, they are an expression of the age-old human striving for "group identity," for "belonging to a group which accepts us as individuals, takes care of us, and protects us," in a word, promotes our "survival."[14] Moreover, the need to view the world in terms of "us" and "them" is strongly rooted in all cultures not only because of its inherent nature, but also because such attitudes, while easily learned (beginning in childhood), are very difficult to unlearn.[15]

Historians have developed a similar understanding of popular perceptions of self and "other." In an insightful piece on religious intolerance in Reformation Germany, for instance, Robert W. Scribner discussed the universality of stereotypes or social labels, which are "continually being formed, modified, forgotten, revived, revised, and discarded" within any society, serving as a "cultural fund to be drawn upon ... available for mobilization at any given moment."[16]

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[13] Cited in Hughes, "Foreigners," 17.
[14] Flohr, "Social Prejudices," 197–200.
[15] Reynolds, Falger, and Vine, "Conclusion," 270.
[16] Scribner, "Preconditions," 44–45.

The key word here is "mobilization": the notion that prejudices, xenophobic perceptions, and tendencies present in all cultures can be activated, brought out of mumbled obscurity into the glaring blaze of daylight and articulate expressions, sometimes violent, of hatred and intolerance. History has shown that often, the mobilizing agent or trigger is economic stress in the guise of a real or perceived shortage or unequal distribution of essential resources (food, land, housing, or employment).[17] The case of England is instructive once again. A recent study shows that almost every decade of Elizabeth I's economically challenged reign saw "actual or planned attacks" on foreigners in various parts of the English realm, and with increasing frequency.[18] Particularly serious attacks took place in the first half of the 1590s in London. Merchants and tradespeople incensed with the government's refusal to meet their demands concerning foreign competition issued highly inflammatory pamphlets against the resident foreigners, the "beastly brutes the Belgians," "drunken drones and faint-hearted Flemings," "fraudulent ... Frenchmen," all "treacherous serpents ... [who] sting [the English] to the very harte." Fighting words were accompanied by riots and the looting of the homes and businesses of those foreigners that heeded the warnings to leave England or else suffer the consequences.[19] As elsewhere in conditions of economic hardship and uncertainty, frustrations were assuaged and the incomprehensible understood by pointing an accusing finger or a hard fist at outsiders.

Religious Toleration in Muscovy

Fundamental concerns about physical sustenance and security set off strident vocalizations and overt acts of popular antipathy towards foreigners in early modern England. The religious issue exacerbated the situation. In an environment where people's core beliefs and allegiances were shaken to the bone by deep and widespread religious strife brought on by the Reformation, the position of outsiders in England and other parts of Europe was made more difficult if they had the misfortune to adhere to a

[17] Flohr, "Social Prejudices," 213. Studies suggest that an equitable distribution of resources would work against racism and violence between groups. Reynolds, Falger, and Vine, "Conclusion," 271.
[18] Yungblut, *Strangers*, 40.
[19] Yungblut, *Strangers*, 41–44.

religion or church other than that of their host ruler and society—even worse if that affiliation was associated with an enemy power. The latter point underlines the important role played by the ruler or state, as opposed to society at large, on issues of faith in the age of confession. *Cuius regio, eius religio* ("whose realm, his religion") was the mantra of the moment and, as Scribner rightly observed, it was above all "the conjuncture of politics and religious fervour" that was "fateful for the development of intolerance."[20] For stranger communities in Europe, popular attitudes towards Catholics, Protestants and sectarians, Jews, Armenian Christians, or Ottoman Muslims for that matter, certainly made themselves felt in day-to-day encounters. However, policies emanating from the top ultimately had the most decisive and deleterious impact on the religious life of outsiders.

While Muscovy certainly experienced tumultuous upheavals and catastrophes—natural and man-made—in the same period, it was spared the tribulations of the Reformation. This is not to say that the religious turmoil generated by the bitter struggle between Catholics and Protestants did not seep into Russia at all. In fact, it did from neighboring Poland, the ancient foe, where the Counter-Reformation, aggressively advanced by the Jesuits, was aimed not only against Protestants, but also the Orthodox co-religionists of the Muscovites, most disturbingly the East Slavic populations (Ukrainians and Belarusians) of the contested borderland region. In the first two decades of the 17th century, during the Time of Troubles, the Catholic threat emanating from Poland assumed its most menacing form in the guise of the invading armies of the False Dmitrii and his Polish supporters and, later, of the Polish monarch himself, Sigismund III, intent on placing his son Władysław on the Russian throne. Both attacks were launched with the blessings of the Jesuits, whose proselytizing aspirations at this time included a *missio moscovitica* ("Moscow mission"), which they explicitly hoped to prosecute in conjunction with Polish military enterprises, prompting one recent study of the subject to observe that the interests of the Jesuits and the ruling house of Poland "were so closely identified that they were in fact inseparable."[21] The Russians ultimately rallied, regained Moscow from the Polish occupiers, installed a new ruler and dynasty (Michael Romanov, 1613–1645), and began the painful process of

[20] Scribner, "Preconditions," 47.
[21] Santich, *Missio Moscovitica,* 39–40.

reconstruction. The ominous shadow of Catholicism, however, continued to hover in the Ukrainian/Belarusian borderlands controlled by Poland, as well as in Smolensk, seized from Russia by the Poles during the Time of Troubles. There the Jesuits lost no time in founding a mission (1611; elevated to a collegium in 1622) that sought to convert the local population.[22]

Despite clashes with Catholic forces, Western Europeans who chose to make Russia their home in the 16th and first half of the 17th centuries generally found themselves in a remarkably accommodating religious environment compared to what they knew in their native lands. Official Muscovite toleration of religions other than Orthodoxy, Christian or not, practiced by non-Russian groups living under the tsar's sway was striking. Even those who had little praise for the Russians, their rulers, or their culture expressed pleasant bafflement at this odd Russian openness. Olearius, who was far from generous in his appreciation of Muscovite culture, could not deny that they "allow freedom of conscience to everyone, even their subjects and slaves" and "tolerat[ed] and [had] dealings with people of other nations and religions, Lutherans, Calvinists, Armenians, Tatars, Persians, Turks," although he was quick to add that, nevertheless, they were "very intolerant" of Catholics and Jews.[23] Margeret, generally more favorable in his assessments of Russia and Russians, was more specific in his treatment of this subject, and more direct. According to Margeret, in Muscovy, everyone enjoyed "freedom of conscience" and could "exercise their religious devotion publicly, except Roman Catholics." The Frenchman could hardly mask his amazement in describing how:

> Even Tatars, Turks, and Persians, besides the Mordvinians and other Mohammedan peoples, are found under the domination of the Russians, each retaining their own religion. There are also Siberians, Lapps, and others who are neither Christian nor Mohammedan, but rather worship certain animals according to their fancy without being forced into [the Russian] religion.[24]

The picture painted by Margeret is not a totally accurate reflection of Muscovite policy towards non-Christian groups under Russian rule, but not too far off the mark. The Muslim populations

[22] Santich, *Missio Moscovitica*, 163.
[23] Baron, *Travels of Olearius*, 248, 277.
[24] Dunning, *Grand Duchy*, 22–23, 24.

of the former Khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan, conquered by Ivan IV in the mid-16th century, witnessed the destruction of their mosques and the erection of Orthodox churches in their places soon after their defeats; prisoners in Russian custody were forcibly converted to Orthodoxy. Priests were sent out from the Russian heartland on a conversion mission, which was carried out through "intimidation, force, and the revocation of traditional privileges," as well as material incentives, depending on circumstances, efforts becoming more systematic in the course of the 17th century.[25] In the far north and Siberia, however, where there was no psychological or strategic need to demonstrate the "political and ideological supremacy of Orthodox Muscovy over former Muslim overlords" and security concerns were minor, unlike along the steppe frontier,[26] the state not only left the local religions unmolested, but repeatedly instructed officials "not to baptize any foreigners by force" and not to offend their religious sensibilities. In this part of the expanding empire, at least in the Muscovite era, practical considerations prevailed, the "unbaptized" population of the region providing valuable revenue for the state in the form of fur tribute, or *iasak*. Those who converted to Orthodoxy were regarded as Russian, and thus not subject to tribute.[27]

Western Europeans who settled in Muscovy were also left largely unmolested in matters of faith. They were free to hold their own religious views and worship according to their own customs and rites. Under Ivan IV in the latter half of the 16th century, the number of foreigners swelled, many recruited by the tsar, and thousands more were captured during the Livonian War and forced to resettle in Moscow and beyond.[28] The large foreign influx prompted a clarification of the type of worship permitted. According to one foreign observer at the time, Catholics and Protestants were required to worship in their own languages and behind closed doors only, presumably, so that Russians would not hear and see the other religions and be corrupted or lured away from Orthodoxy. Furthermore, the foreigners were strictly enjoined

[25] Khodarkovsky, "Conversion," 120–125. For a vivid contemporary description of the treatment of Tatar prisoners, see Fletcher, *Russe Commonwealth*, 94.
[26] Khodarkovsky, "Conversion," 120; and Khodarkovsky, *Russia's Steppe Frontier*, 223.
[27] Slezkine, *Arctic Mirrors*, 43.
[28] Tsvetaev, *Protestantstvo*, 29–45.

to refrain from proselytizing among the tsar's subjects.[29] The degree to which Europeans could practice their faith freely in Muscovy depended, to a large extent, on whether they were Catholic or Protestant. As several foreign accounts of the period record, although Catholics were permitted to work and live in Russia, they were not allowed to worship publicly, since the establishment of Catholic churches was forbidden. Catholics were thus restricted to private worship.[30] Presumably some had private chapels at home, which, as far as can be ascertained, were not banned. There was a ban, though, on the importation of calendars and crucifixes from abroad, at least in the late 1630s, which must have impinged somewhat on Catholic worship.[31] More importantly, Catholics in Russia were sometimes deprived of their priests. According to one source, while Patriarch Filaret co-ruled (1619–1633) during the reign of his son Tsar Michael (1613–1645), Catholics were not permitted to keep priests in their employ. Towards the end of Filaret's life, however, in 1630, a Russo-French commercial treaty granted French merchants the right to have and employ Catholic priests in their homes.[32]

To have allowed resident Catholics in Muscovy to assemble in large gatherings in churches headed by priests, perhaps Jesuits potentially sympathetic to Polish interests, would certainly have been generous, but conceivably risky from a security standpoint. In an era when religion and politics were inextricably intertwined, the suspicion and caution displayed by the Muscovite state vis-à-vis Catholics was not exaggerated, rather quite typical, and even restrained compared to actions taken in other settings "threatened" by Catholicism, for instance England and the United Provinces. What ultimately matters is the Muscovite perception at the time, whether accurate or not, and this perception was one of suspicion, especially in the decades following the Time of Troubles, during which Poles played no small part in wreaking havoc and destruction in Russia for over a decade, subsequently threatening the newly installed Romanov dynasty by refusing to give up Polish

[29] Liechtenhan, *Les trois christianismes,* 37.

[30] Public worship for Catholics (in Moscow) was not sanctioned until the late 17th century (1691) under Peter I. A later 1705 decree permitted Catholics and Protestants to build churches in St. Petersburg.

[31] Szeftel, "Foreign Merchants," 339–340.

[32] Pypin, "Inozemtsy," 282; and Kirchner, *Commercial Relations*, 114.

claims to the Muscovite throne. If we add to this the age-old animosity between Orthodoxy and Catholicism, exacerbated by aggressive proselytizing efforts by Jesuits and Polish-Lithuanian clerics among Orthodox populations under their control (in modern-day Ukraine and Belarus as well as Smolensk), which were disturbing, to say the least, to the Russian Orthodox Church, the result is a potent recipe for anti-Catholicism among Muscovite state and church hierarchs that could not but impact negatively somehow on Catholics in Russia. That it did not impact more forcefully is what is truly striking, particularly in the 1620s and early 1630s, when Patriarch Filaret (Tsar Michael's father), who had spent several years in Polish captivity and was therefore particularly hostile to Poles and Catholics, was the de facto ruler of Russia.[33] Despite his personal feelings and the traditional antipathy of the church he headed to all things Catholic, Filaret, in his capacity as secular ruler, ultimately adhered to the Muscovite tradition of tolerating Catholicism within Russia, albeit cautiously, to further state interests. Thus, although he initially prohibited Catholics from keeping priests in their homes, he relented in 1630 to secure a Russo-French commercial treaty on the eve of Russo-Polish Smolensk War (1632–1634), when Russia was courting French support against Poland. In 1628, he had also banned the use of Russian house servants by foreigners, Catholics and Protestants alike, allegedly because they prevented their Russian domestics from practicing their religion properly; it was difficult for Russians in foreign employ to observe the Orthodox fasts and feasts. However, when Charles I of England —still regarded as a potential ally against Poland, or at least, a source of some financial or military support—asked that his subjects, the merchants of the Muscovy Company, be exempted from the ban for convenience's sake, he was not denied, and neither were various Western Europeans who petitioned for exemption.[34] Apparently, the contributions Europeans could make to Muscovy, real or imagined, were more important than the risks to the eternal salvation of Muscovite domestics.

For Protestants, the parameters of religious freedom in Russia were considerably broader. Under Ivan IV, Protestants were permitted to erect a church (1575–1576) and practice their faith publicly

[33] For more on Filaret, see Keep, "Filaret."

[34] Baron, "Moscow's *Nemeckaja Sloboda*," 7; and Szeftel, "Foreign Merchants," 348–349.

(although invisibly, "behind closed doors"). In an unsurprising outburst from Ivan IV against this Moscow community in 1580–1581 (who was *not* attacked by the hypersensitive tsar in these years?!) the Protestant church was demolished, but a new one went up under Boris Godunov (1601) to serve the needs of the growing number of Western Europeans coming to Russia to enter the tsar's service, a trend that continued throughout the 17th century. This second church was razed by the supporters of the second False Dmitrii during the Time of Troubles (1610), but was restored by 1620 and enlarged in subsequent years, serving Protestants of all professions, nationalities, and stripes: Lutherans, Anglicans, Calvinists; Germans, Dutch, English, Scots, Irish; doctors, apothecaries, craftsmen, military men, and merchants. Fire, the bane of Russian cities, destroyed the church in 1626. However, it was soon resurrected as the "Church of the New Foreigners" or "Officers Church." In 1629 the same section of the city (Belyi Gorod) saw the establishment of a separate Calvinist church referred to as the "Dutch Church," and later, an additional small chapel. Because of the large concentration of English merchants residing in Vologda, one of the main trading posts along the Moscow-Archangel route, the Muscovy Company had a church attached to its enormous commercial yard there. Another church in Archangel served the spiritual needs of the many merchants and mariners who flocked there annually during the trading season, as well as others in the lively commercial centers of Nizhnii Novgorod and Astrakhan, on the Volga.[35] The only restriction I have encountered on public Protestant worship in Russia in this period applies to the subjects of the Swedish monarch, who were forbidden from erecting their own church and assembling there for worship, according to the terms of the Treaty of Stolbovo (1617), which ended years of hostilities between Russia and Sweden connected to the Time of Troubles.[36] Like the Catholics, this group of foreigners was restricted to practicing their faith in private. The wounds of war and occupation still raw, the prohibition is not surprising; nor is it as severe as it might first appear given the existence of other Protestant churches in some of the most important trading cities of Russia that were open to all foreigners.

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[35] Tsvetaev, *Protestantstvo*, 29–72, 163, 222; and Hughes, "Foreigners," 4.
[36] Shaskol'skii, *Stolbovskii mir,* 104–105.

As one historian noted, "the Russians somehow never learned to hate Protestantism quite so much as they did the Church of Rome."[37] Unlike Catholicism and Catholics, which, like steppe Islam and Muslims, were perceived as threatening by both the Muscovite state and the Russian Orthodox Church, Protestants, as distasteful as their faith was to the Russians, were regarded as relatively benign, like the non-Christian "small peoples" of the north. They were *not* associated with proselytizing, Jesuits, or Catholic Poland, but rather with territories—England, the United Provinces, northern German principalities and commercial centers—at the cutting edge of mining, metallurgy, weapons manufacture, military technique, and international trade, all key components of any successful state-building project. Moreover, Muscovite policy since Ivan's time had been to court the support, whether military/political or monetary, of Protestant powers (for instance England, Sweden, and Denmark) in the ongoing struggle against Catholic Poland. On several occasions, these efforts to secure Protestant favor and assistance involved possible marriage alliances with the Muscovite dynasty.[38] The undeniable and preponderantly Protestant contribution, real or potential, to Muscovite state objectives helped to ensure that Protestants in Russia, more so than Catholics, would generally be indulged with considerable latitude in matters of faith.

The Western European Model of Religious Intolerance

Valerie Kivelson's insightful reflections on the Muscovite imperial project in Siberia bring nuance to the story of the Russian conquest of Siberia by arguing convincingly that, while eschewing a "concerted missionizing campaign" among the pagan population of this perceived "El Dorado," the Russians nevertheless regarded their Orthodox Christian presence and church-building activity in Siberia—"Christianizing the landscape" rather than the people—as God's work.[39] However, as godly as the Muscovites might have imagined their actions in Siberia, the fact remains that they tolerated paganism in a Christian state. Fiscal concerns prevailed over religious zeal.

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[37] Florinsky, *Russia,* 1: 273.

[38] Kurilo, *Ocherki po istorii Liuteran*, 33–35. For example, in the final years preceding his death, Tsar Michael was negotiating a possible marriage between his daughter and Prince Waldemar of Denmark.

[39] Kivelson, *Cartographies of Tsardom*, 149–170.

Far removed from the age and the relationship that people and rulers had with religious faith, we might view the Russian approach as obvious. It was not. But for a few exceptions, throughout Europe in the same period, religious fervor and intolerance were the norm *even* when it would have been economically more expedient to practice toleration. A few examples suffice to show that this was so. A case in point is Denmark, where, despite official pronouncements recognizing the economic utility of welcoming foreigners into the realm, successive governments from the 16th century on banned non-Lutherans from settling in Denmark, banishing many and threatening those who sought to surreptitiously stay (as well as those who harbored them) with execution. A persistent "preoccupation with confessional issues" undermined the mercantilist policies pursued by the government of Christian IV in the early 17th century, a central component of which was the recruitment of Dutch, that is, non-Lutheran, specialists in mining and metallurgy as well as weapons manufacture, fields crucial to both economic/industrial development and state-building. In 1607, Danish recruiters were authorized to promise interested parties freedom of religion in Denmark, but a second drive a decade later withheld religious rights. Denmark thus reverted to the old status quo, requiring all foreigners who wished to settle in the realm to pass an examination administered by lay and church officials proving their adherence to the Lutheran faith.[40]

Throughout the German expanse in the same period, instances of tolerance were "very meagre," "ad hoc," and unstable, liable to collapse at the whim of changing circumstances. This situation prevailed even in commercial centers whose life-blood depended on the activities and resources of a multiplicity of individuals and groups, whether Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, Jew or other, including trading diasporas long active in these commercial settings. Pragmatic secular authorities in many of these cities did attempt to accommodate the various faiths of foreigners to some degree, but their efforts were stiffly resisted by the clergy and bore limited fruit, and this only after several generations of struggle.[41] Lutheran Hamburg, for instance, a declining Hanse town anxious to recapture some of its former prosperity, drew growing numbers of Italian Catholics, Sephardi Jews, and Dutch Calvinists in the 16th

[40] Grell, "Exile and Tolerance," 166–173.

[41] Scribner, "Preconditions," 37–39, 46–47; and Guggisberg, "Tolerance and Intolerance," 149.

century whose wealth and skills served as valuable economic stimuli. Despite the obvious benefits they had to offer, the opposition of the Hamburg Church worked to stem the flow of these groups by denying them the right to public worship (finally attained by non-Lutheran Christians in 1785 and by Jews only in 1849) and attempting to expel them from Hamburg entirely into the 17th century. Nonetheless, sustained secular resistance to these efforts helped maintain the foreign presence, which contributed to transforming Hamburg into the most important German commercial center by the beginning of the 18th century. Cologne, by contrast, which remained staunchly intolerant, wallowed in economic decline and stagnation, the obvious benefits of religious toleration—even of a limited nature—provided by Hamburg notwithstanding.[42]

Larger polities with a substantial and highly developed merchant class and a strong appreciation of the centrality of trade to fiscal health and overall economic prosperity (not to mention social order) also balked on the issue of religious freedom. The Dutch Republic, for instance, long held up as a "haven of toleration" in the 17th century, was much less liberal than once thought. Catholics in the newly forming Calvinist state in the late 16th century were denied the right to assemble for worship, either privately or publicly, while non-Calvinist Protestants, although not excessively molested by the secular authorities, were staunchly opposed, thwarted, and pressured by church leaders at least until the mid-17th century in a long "uphill battle" for religious liberty.[43] Portuguese Jews fleeing the Spanish Inquisition, many with substantial financial resources and commercial contacts that could clearly help the Dutch in their state-building project and ongoing struggle with the Hapsburgs, attempted to establish themselves in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and several other commercial centers of the United Provinces. Although anxious to tap into their resources and networks, as was pointedly evident in negotiations with Jewish leaders, in the end, the Dutch proved unable to accommodate Jewish merchants and entrepreneurs on the religious question. At first insistent on restricting worship to the private sphere, Dutch authorities did eventually relent and allow public worship, but only if a minimum number of "distinguished families" settled (30 in Rotterdam, 50-100 in Haarlem), which effectively under-

[42] Whaley, *Religious Toleration*, 6–11, 206.
[43] Pettegree, "Politics of Toleration," 182, 185–198.

mined the right in practice. By the second decade of the 17th century, the law also allowed for the segregation of Jewish communities at the discretion of municipal authorities, sternly warned against "corrupting" Christian servants to Judaism, and imposed the death penalty on Jews who had sexual relations with, or married, Christians.[44]

In England, Catholics, Calvinists, and sectarian Protestants not approved by the Church of England all faced an official policy that relentlessly sought to impose religious uniformity. Under Elizabeth I and her Stuart successor James I, a slew of "hard and unforgiving" recusancy bills were issued, aimed at suppressing Catholicism, even at the private level, while sectarians, who poisoned the social order with the evil of heterodoxy, were ruthlessly suppressed.[45] Since the Middle Ages, English state policy welcomed, even encouraged, the trade, entrepreneurial activities, and settlement of foreigners in England, first accepting Germans associated with the Hanse as well as Italians from the more economically, financially, and technologically advanced city-states of the South. Later centuries saw a growing influx of individuals from the Low Countries and France. Some sought economic gain in commerce, the trades, or banking, while others (Dutch Calvinists, French Huguenots), especially under Elizabeth I, fled religious persecution at the hands of Catholics on the continent.[46] The flow of Protestant refugees, many of whom were highly skilled, wealthy, and networked, grew dramatically in the second half of the 16th century and was a boon for a state that was industrially backward in key sectors such as arms manufacture and metal extraction, as well as dangerously dependent on foreign (read: hostile, Catholic) sources for specie. That foreigners represented a "potent economic force" was not lost on Elizabeth and many of her policy-makers, nor was the fact that these invaluable human resources could only be kept in England securely and for an extended time by indulging them with religious freedom.[47] The strength of these realizations notwithstanding, England awarded religious rights grudgingly and with important restrictions. Under Elizabeth and her successors, Protestant foreigners were officially permitted to worship publicly in

[44] Huussen, "Sephardi Jews in Holland," 20–30.
[45] Questier, *Conversion,* 102–108.
[46] Postan, *Medieval Trade;* Lloyd, *German Hanse*; and Yungblut, *Strangers*, 10, 12–17.
[47] Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities*, 134.

"stranger churches," but had to endure persistent pressure by the authorities to join local English parishes. They also had to cede ultimate authority in their religious affairs to the Bishop of London, adapt their rites and ceremonies to the English model, and eventually adopt the English Prayer Book and give up the use of their native languages during religious services.[48] Moreover, these communities endured increasingly intrusive official enquiries concerning their persons and religious beliefs from 1561 on, when municipal censuses or surveys of resident aliens, particularly in London, were introduced.[49]

The Sway of Eurasia and the Imprint of Empire

While Muscovite actions aimed at suppressing Islam in the Volga region in the 16th and 17th centuries mirror the age's drive towards religious uniformity in the wider European space in the interests of moral order, social harmony, and national security, its willingness to tolerate, even preserve (at least for a time), the pagan spiritual beliefs and practices of the Siberian natives under Russian control does not—nor does its religious policy vis-à-vis the growing number of Europeans settling in Russia in these years. Although the parameters of the religious freedom accorded them by the Muscovites did vary, both Protestants *and* Catholics, the latter increasingly suspect because of the Polish/Jesuit connection, lived, worked, and worshipped in early modern Russia relatively unmolested. As far as we know, until the early 1650s, when young Tsar Alexis was heavily influenced by a group of hyper-zealous, xenophobic Orthodox hierarchs, nobody was pressured to abandon their faith for Orthodoxy, or harassed by officials on the basis of religious conviction.[50] Like the Siberian pagans, the Europeans were useful to Russian strategic interests, and in a much larger and substantial variety of ways, from bolstering revenues and quickening the flow of specie to a mine-deficient state, to establishing new industries and modernizing an outmoded army in a traditionally hostile and belligerent environment. But, as the quick overview of European religious intolerance above demonstrates, the mere usefulness of a religious minority was not sufficient to ensure that it would be

[48] Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities*, 131, 295.
[49] Yungblut, *Strangers*, 87, 89.
[50] On the "Zealots of Piety," in particular, their relationship with Aleksei, see Pascal, *Avvakum*, 35–73 and passim; and Longworth, *Alexis*, 31–35, 54–61, 68–91.

admitted into a given territory or allowed to practice its faith, publicly or privately, in the early modern era. From this perspective, Muscovy stands out as a striking exception to the prevailing model.

If we shift our focus from the context of a Western European culture of slowly but steadily emerging national states with their stark intra-Christian dichotomies, struggling bitterly against the collapse of the once unifying force of Latin Christendom, to the ethnically and religiously diverse spaces under Ottoman and Mughal rule, we see that the Muscovite ability to place practical considerations above religious anxieties and spiritually inclined motivations aligns neatly with the pragmatic imperial strategies employed in culturally mixed settings. Across this vast Eurasian space, criss-crossed for centuries by caravans, trading diasporas, and other migrating communities, the landscape was rich with peoples, languages, religious beliefs and practices: a panoply of difference embedded in the region for millennia that forged an "appreciation of unfamiliar values."[51] Prejudices and animosities between groups, awareness of the "other" certainly existed,[52] but the cultural mélange was too ancient, too common, and the recognition of the harm xenophobic actions could cause to trading emporia too generalized to be attacked or challenged by exclusionist policies unless economic or political necessity demanded it.[53] In this world, imperial integrity was best assured and promoted not by the single-minded pursuit of religious uniformity, but by differential religious policies tailored to specific groups and contingencies. Thus, while the Islamic faith of the Mughals inclined them towards intolerance of the polytheistic Hinduism practiced by the majority

[51] Chaudhuri, *Indian Ocean*, 165.

[52] This awareness, which appears to have been stronger in Ottoman territories than under the Mughals or in Southeast Asia, translated not into hostile actions or policies aimed against foreigners, but into the "almost universal" physical segregation of foreign groups or diasporas. In some cases, this segregation was required by the authorities; in others it simply happened. As P. D. Curtin observed, it seems that both host societies and alien communities throughout the region felt most comfortable with "a slightly distant contact." Masters, *Western Economic Dominance,* 78; and Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade*, 38, 132, 198.

[53] Japan's highly restrictive policies towards foreign merchants in our period, particularly from the 1630s on, is a notable exception. The Japanese attitude towards foreigners, heavily laced with suspicion and hostility, has been described as "peculiar in the extreme," representing "a significant deviation from the norms that characterized the mechanics of Asian trade." Prakash, "Hostile Environment," 244–245, 252.

of their subjects, it did not prevent Mughal rulers from allowing Hindus to practice their religion, although the degree to which they could do so varied from reign to reign, depending on the perceived expediency of the policy at a particular point in time.[54] Further, the Mughals did not interfere with the religious life of non-Muslim aliens, for instance Western Europeans, Catholic and Protestant alike, who established trading operations and settlements in their territory in the 16th and 17th centuries.[55] In the Ottoman Empire in the same period, religious freedom for both subjects and stranger communities was extensive, under the dual influence of the "egalitarianism and inclusive traditions of Central Asia and the religious tolerance of Islam." Muslims, Christians, and Jews were all "People of the Book" according to Muslims. As such, all three groups were permitted to practice their religions freely. Asserting Muslim superiority in theory, the Ottomans simultaneously displayed a "near absolute but effective disregard" for difference, religious or other, creating an inclusive environment where "the various religions, ethnicities, and aliens within the empire co-existed and co-mingled virtually at will."[56]

Shaped by the dual heritage of the polyphonous and pantheistic medieval Rus' and of the Tatar Golden Horde that succeeded it, for centuries a space settled, inhabited, visited, and ruled by a host of peoples—pagan, Christian, Muslim, European, and Asian—and straddling East and West culturally, economically, and politically, the emerging empire of Muscovy in the 16th and 17th centuries was a world of many worlds, past and present. It was a universe where, decidedly more like Asia than Europe, diversity was not just accepted, but as Kivelson observes, *expected*.[57] In this culturally fragmented environment, the pursuit of religious uniformity was not an obvious course, at least not as far as the non-Russian populations, indigenous or alien, were concerned. In early modern Western Europe, religious toleration could be used as an instrument promoting economic or political ends, but much more frequently and systematically, it served as a weapon of persecution in the name of the one true faith or church. In Muscovite Russia, the inverse was true. While the instrumentality of toleration could

[54] Srivastava, *Great Mughals*, 82–87.
[55] Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade,* 129–132; and Arasaratnam, "Indian Commercial Groups," 44.
[56] Goffman, *Ottoman Empire,* 9, 15, 46–47, 170–171, 186–187.
[57] Kivelson, *Cartographies of Tsardom*.

go either way, it tended towards pragmatism, rather than religious fervor. The ethno-cultural foundation of diversity embedded in the Eurasian expanse of which Russia was a part coupled with a practical approach to rule characteristic of imperial strategies combined and reinforced each other. The result was a flexible framework within which the supremacy of Orthodox Christianity was proclaimed and enforced among the core Russian population, an elastic policy of religious toleration was applied to conquered peoples and resident aliens, and state interests, particularly in the fiscal and military spheres, were vigorously pursued, all simultaneously.

Had the Reformation and the counter-movement it spawned not been as peripheral to Russia as they were, the picture might well have been different, at least as far as the toleration shown to Catholics and Protestants was concerned. Developments in the neighboring kingdom of Poland-Lithuania, the largest state in Europe at the time, are instructive. Like Russia, the 16th-century Polish-Lithuanian state was home to many peoples, Slavic (Poles, Ukrainians, Belarusians) and other (Armenians, Jews, Germans, Tatars, Roma), as well as religions. Religious diversity here was "prolix," including "all the religious beliefs known in Europe"—Catholics, Orthodox, Armenian Christians, Lutherans, Calvinists, Czech Brethren, Antitrinitarians, Mennonites, Judaizing Christians, Jews, Muslims, and pagans; all were represented. And, in the inclusive traditions of Eurasia, at whose westernmost extremity the "Catholic" kingdom stood, the religious beliefs and practices of many of these groups were tolerated, at least in practice, according to limits and arrangements worked out locally with secular and religious authorities.[58] The struggles triggered by the Reformation, however, and the aggressiveness of the Counter-Reformation in a polity with exceptionally strong and longstanding ties to Rome proved too strong a force for the regional inclination towards pragmatic religious toleration—evident in Muscovy and buttressed there by the dictates of empire to survive. By the first half of the 17th century, during the "new wave of intolerance" sweeping across Europe, religious pluralism in Poland-Lithuania was extinguished.[59]

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[58] Santich, *Missio Moscovitica*, 41; Müller, "Protestant Confessionalisation," 264–265; and Guggisberg, "Religious Toleration," 45.

[59] Guggisberg, "Religious Toleration," 46.

In Sweden, not part of the Inner Eurasian world, but close enough to its western extremities to be influenced by it, the opposite prevailed. For centuries, Swedes, Poles, and Russians had waged war on each other in the Baltic's waters and hinterland for control of land, ports, and trade routes, vying for regional supremacy. Each warily eyed the other's every move, assessing the potential impact of neighboring developments on its position and options.[60] Christianized relatively late, never as fully integrated into the medieval church or Latin Christendom as other European states, Sweden was a weakly Catholicized space where the lurking presence of paganism was the greatest concern to local churchmen when the Reformation started in the 16th century. Situated on "the far edge of Christendom" with a church whose "pulse beat sluggishly," the lack of Catholic vigor on the one hand, and a correspondingly passionless, "tortuous" Reformation on the other, Sweden vacillated, "remarkably indecisive in religion, dithering between Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Catholicism."[61] More importantly for our purposes, the religious vacuum gave Swedish rulers a freer hand than most others in the period on the religious question, allowing them, like the Muscovites whom they watched so closely, to use religious toleration to further state interests. Although the subject requires fuller research, one could argue that the active, sustained Muscovite drive from the end of the 15th century to bring skilled foreigners to Russia to help strengthen the state by, among other policies, beefing up the military and modernizing arms production and supply, was one of the factors inducing successive Swedish monarchs to pursue a similar strategy from the 1550s on.

Beginning with Gustav Vasa (1521–1560), who laid the foundations of the mercantilist policies that helped shape the "economic and political conditions for Sweden's emergence as a European power in the early seventeenth century," Sweden periodically sent recruiters to German territories, England, or the United Provinces, and especially aggressive efforts were made in the 1590s and subsequent decades.[62] In these years, Sweden and Russia were both

[60] Useful discussions of relations in the region include Attman, *Baltic Markets;* Roberts, *Early Vasas*; Roberts, *Gustavus Adolphus;* Floria, *Russko-pol'skie otnosheniia*; Shaskol'skii, *Stolbovskii mir*, and Porshnev, *Tridtsatiletniaia voina.*

[61] Roberts, *Early Vasas*, 59–62; and Grell, "Exile and Tolerance," 173–174.

[62] Grell, "Exile and Tolerance," 175–179.

after the same kind of people, the same kind of skills, and, most probably in some cases, the very same individuals. To effectively compete with Russia for these valuable human resources, given the great wealth, and, therefore, wooing power, of the Muscovite purse and the tolerant attitude of Russian rulers on the issue of faith, Sweden needed to make its pitch to foreigners as attractive as possible. Given the Muscovite factor, to have denied desperately needed foreigners religious freedom would have undercut the entire project. Consequently, foreigners who settled in Sweden in this period were accorded religious rights, in some cases formalized in writing, provided they were of the "Evangelical" (i.e. Protestant) faith, and were even assisted by the authorities in the construction of houses of worship and provision of preachers.[63] The flexibility on the religious question afforded Swedish rulers by the weakly developed religious identity of both church and state and by an internally muted Reformation made it possible for Sweden to adopt the model of tolerance provided by Muscovy. And Muscovy was a concern—with the steady expansion of its territorial and revenue base through conquest as well as its rapidly developing White Sea trade, and the increasing centralization of its state apparatus, it projected growing, ominous strength. To counter it and project Sweden onto the European stage, all weapons were necessary, including the age's most cynical: religious toleration. In turn, the dynamic of competition or "emulation" inherent in the state system could not but further bolster the existing Muscovite paradigm.[64]

Concluding Remarks

"It is quite obvious," observed one scholar, "that the creation of pluralistic orders was generally unwelcome in the age of confessionalism."[65] Throughout Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries, both native and alien populations endured the consequences of an almost universal, often violently aggressive drive by secular and spiritual authorities towards religious uniformity, be it of a Catholic or Protestant (Anglican, Lutheran, or Calvinist) face. Ironically, only on the easternmost fringes of the continent, the "backward" backyard of Europe, was religious pluralism a possibility. In

[63] Grell, "Exile and Tolerance," 175–176.
[64] On the competitive nature of the state system, see Hall, "Economic Development," 154–176.
[65] Guggisberg, "Religious Toleration," 47.

Muscovite Russia, Orthodox Christianity, the religion of the rulers and core Russian population, was practiced side by side with Siberian paganism as well as Catholicism and Protestantism, in all its varieties, in a space traversed and cohabited by innumerable peoples for millennia. In this environment, cultural diversity and religious heterogeneity were familiar and, except in the isolated case of the Muscovite attack on Islam, essentially non-threatening to Russian rulers. The exigencies of the emerging Russian empire in the second half of the 16th century, as under the Ottomans and the Mughals in the same period, only strengthened the largely *laissez-faire* Russian approach to the issue of religious freedom. Much more so than in the evolving national or culturally homogeneous states of Europe, "the pragmatics of secularized power politics" and the awareness of "the dysfunctional as well as functional aspects of intolerance,"[66] resonated sharply in imperial spaces faced with the formidable challenge of effectively holding together and exploiting a mélange of territories and peoples that were not naturally or necessarily connected otherwise, all with very limited resources or coercive options.

The dual influences of Eurasian cultural diversity and the *realpolitik* of imperial rule provided solid bedrock for relatively broad religious toleration in Russia in the interests of the early modern state-building project. In an age of intolerance, the foundation was solid enough to withstand the tremors of the Counter-Reformation, which shook with increasing force the western borderlands that separated Orthodox Muscovy from Catholic Poland, reaching within the tsar's realm itself by the first half of the 17th century. Intimately associated with Rome, culturally and dynastically linked for centuries to Latin Christendom, and thus part of the larger European battleground pitting Catholicism against the evil forces of Protestantism, Poland ultimately succumbed to the Western European paradigm of religious intolerance. By the first half of the 17th century, the sway of Eurasia ceded to the pull of the Counter-Reformation. From this perspective, Muscovy's place in the Orthodox rather than Catholic world and the peripheral impact of the Reformation in Russia added another layer of support to the "liberal" Russian attitude towards religious pluralism. Similarly, the limp hold of Catholicism in neighboring Sweden, at the far northern edge of Europe, and its relatively fuss-free Reformation allowed rulers there to act along much the same lines as their Muscovite

[66] Scribner, "Preconditions," 43.

counterparts in pursuit of the same secular, state-oriented goals, with startlingly successful results by the mid-17th century.

Over a century ago, the Russian historian A. Pypin underlined the dichotomy between the apparent xenophobic bent of Muscovite culture and a purposeful official effort over time to bring Western Europeans to Russia. More recent scholarship too has noted "the disconnect," the "conflicting claims of *raison d'état* and Muscovite traditional culture," and the contradiction between popular and religious attitudes and state needs.[67] As hostile and suspicious as they might have been towards Catholics and Protestants, the Muscovites, at least those who ruled, understood with growing clarity that the West had much to offer Russia to help it survive geopolitically and even dominate. While 19th-century Slavophiles liked to downplay the extent and importance of the West's contribution to Russia, the Muscovites knew which course to take. As Pypin put it, had they denied the necessity of Western knowledge, skills, and assistance, they would have been guilty of no less than "national treason."[68] Fortunately for Russia's policymakers they operated in a milieu that afforded them, unlike most of their European counterparts, the luxury of tolerating more than one religion and of adopting differential religious policies to suit specific groups at specific junctures.

In light of Muscovy's long-standing tradition of cautious tolerance and its successful contribution in one way or another to Muscovite advances in numerous spheres, particularly those connected to the vital areas of technology and the military, state actions against Western Europeans impinging on their religious life, first in the early 1640s and more dramatically a decade later, are incongruous.[69] Muscovite deviation from the paradigm of

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[67] Pypin, "Inozemtsy," 255–256; Baron, "Moscow's *Nemeckaja Sloboda*," 17; and Hughes, "Foreigners," 4.

[68] Pypin, "Inozemtsy," 256.

[69] In 1643, a decree was issued ordering the destruction of the Protestant churches in Moscow. Shortly thereafter, permission was given for the resumption of public Protestant worship, but only in churches erected beyond the city core. In 1653 foreigners were accused of, and tried for, sorcery and "profaning" the Orthodox religion, harassed by the authorities for keeping Russian Orthodox servants in their employ, and threatened with the confiscation of their landed property if they did not convert to the Russian faith. These actions culminated in the famous expulsion of the Western European community from Moscow and the establishment of the "Foreign Quarter" outside the city. For details, see Baron, "Moscow's *Nemeckaja Sloboda*," 8–17.

toleration, under the influence of "spiritual activists" who were impelled, in Weberian terms, to construct "a community of faith and a common ethical way of life"[70] at the possible expense of Western expertise, wealth, and connections—and on the eve of a new showdown with Poland in the shadow of a now powerhouse Sweden to boot—was neither an obvious nor inevitable development. That such an uncharacteristic and risky path would be adopted, that the "eschatological moment" as Scribner observed it time and time again, in Europe during the Reformation[71] would effect a shift in the rulership's traditional, secular-oriented perception of state interests, is not easily explained. It is this disconnect more than any other that needs to be addressed by scholars.

[70] Scribner, "Preconditions," 43.
[71] Ibid.

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PRAYING FOR THE DEAD IN MUSCOVY: KINSHIP AWARENESS AND ORTHODOX BELIEF IN THE COMMEMORATIONS OF MUSCOVITE ROYALTY

Russell E. Martin

St. Athanasius the Great, the fourth-century father of the Christian Church who defended and elaborated many of Christianity's fundamental teachings, had a lot to say about death and the dead. For him and for early Christians, the dead remained very much a part of the church itself, still awaiting Christ's return, still hoping for their salvation.[1] They may no longer have been among the living, but the dead were not truly gone for early Christians. They lived on, souls separated from bodies, yet a part of the community of believers and continuing to work out their salvation with the aid of their brethren in Christ.

This aid came principally in the form of commemorative prayers for their salvation offered by living relatives and friends. The liturgical and calendrical structures of the early Christian Church, and in later centuries in the Orthodox East, were arranged with prayer for the dead as an integral part of the life of the pious Christian. Children prayed for their departed parents and ancestors, parents prayed for children who had died in childhood, siblings prayed for each other, and husbands for their wives and

[1] See "Poslanie Iosifa Volotskogo kniagine Goleninoi," 350.

Tapestry of Russian Christianity: Studies in History and Culture. Nickolas Lupinin, Donald Ostrowski and Jennifer B. Spock, eds. Columbus, Ohio: Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures and the Resource Center for Medieval Slavic Studies, The Ohio State University, 2016, 189–226.

in-laws—the entirety of Christian culture embraced the commemoration of the dead. Indeed, commemoration was so central to early Christians that St. Athanasius the Great warned that those who did not remember to pray for their reposed relatives risked condemnation at the Last Judgment, when neglected kin would appear at the dread judgment seat of Christ as witnesses for the prosecution.

In the Orthodox East, commemoration came to be linked with monasticism, as monks, whose vocation it was to pray (for themselves and for the sins of the world), began to offer themselves as supplicants for those laity, who, being in the world, had other more secular ways of spending their days. In medieval and early modern Russia, monasteries quickly became centers for commemorative prayers for the dead, and every level of society, from princes to peasants, came to monasteries to offer donations that would guarantee that prayers for the donors' kin would be offered by the monks. Donations varied in sum, as did the range of commemorations they paid for. Donors could pay a small sum (perhaps a few kopecks up to perhaps a few rubles) for commemorative prayers for a short time (the 40-day prayers after the person's death, or daily prayers for perhaps a year). Larger sums could procure commemorations for longer periods (daily, or annually on the date the person died, or on the feast day of the person's patron saint), or forever, or, as monastic sources put it, "for as long as this holy house stands."

The means for performing commemorations at Muscovite monasteries or large churches was the synodikon, a liturgical book that contained the names of reposed Orthodox Christians that were to be recited at monasteries and churches for the salvation of the souls of those listed.[2] The structure and arrangement of synodikons in the 16th and 17th centuries could vary enormously, but many began with what was a standard opening commemoration

[2] The word "synodikon" was used for two functionally very different sources. The first was the Synodikon of Orthodoxy, a literary text read once a year on the Sunday of Orthodoxy (the first Sunday of Great Lent), which commemorated the restoration of icons in Orthodox worship, and which listed all those anathematized by the church. The second form of the synodikon, the one employed in this study, is the liturgical book that recorded commemorations and that was used at various times and in various services to remember in prayer the names of those recorded in it. On this distinction, see Petukhov, *Ocherki iz literaturnoi istorii sinodiki*; and Steindorff, *Memoria in Altrußland*.

of patriarchs, metropolitans, tsars, tsaritsas, grand princes, grand princesses, appanage princes (collateral members of the ruling dynasty) and their wives. After this obligatory commemoration of the rulers of Muscovy's church and state, most synodikons continued with the names of Orthodox Christians for whom donors, almost always close relatives, had commissioned prayers. In the late 16th and 17th centuries, the custom emerged of ordering names into family entries, or articles (*stat'ia*), each comprising the family of prince so-and-so, followed by names, and then the family of some other prince so-and-so and more names.[3] The synodikon was not only the liturgical listing of names to be read at church services by monks—its main and original purpose—but it also was a source that can be used today to reveal notions of family and kinship awareness that were held by late medieval Muscovites, whether they were peasants or princes or tsars.

This article poses and explores a number of fundamental questions about kinship awareness and Orthodox belief as they are revealed in monastic synodikons from the 16th and 17th centuries. The focus will be on royal commemorations: the lists of royalty that appear at the beginning of synodikons and in the prayer lists of the Romanov boyar clan that rose in 1613 to occupy the throne after a 15-year interregnum. The royal commemorations in three synodikons will be examined in detail: the 1556/67 commemoration list of Ivan IV the Terrible;[4] the early 17th-century synodikon of the Znamenskii Monastery;[5] and the 1677 synodikon compiled by Tsar Fedor Alekseevich for a private family chapel in the royal apartments of the Kremlin.[6] These three important synodikons will also be placed within the context of a set of royal and Romanov family commemorations that appear in more than a dozen other synodikons of the 16th and 17th centuries.[7] Who was

[3] On the structure of synodikons and their use, see Konev, "Synodikologiia"; Shablova, *Sinodik*, 3–62; Spock, "Commemoration and Social Identity"; and Romanov, *Russkii sinodik*, 16–30. More generally, see Spock, "Good Order of the Monastery"; and Miller, *Saint Sergius of Radonezh*, 105–68.

[4] See Kashtanov, "Tsarskii sinodik"; and Belokurov, "Sinodik Moskovskikh tsarei XVI veka."

[5] RGADA, Fond 188, opis' 1, No. 46, folia 4v–6, and No. 47, ff. 16–17v.

[6] GIM, Museum Collection, No. 3652.

[7] Other Romanov synodikon family "articles" used in this study appear in the following sources: RGADA, Fond 1192, op. 2, No. 561, ff. 10, 10v, and 16v

listed in these royal prayer lists and who was not? What do these lists tell us about kinship awareness among the ruling families of Muscovy? What was the commemorative activity of Muscovite rulers before 1613 and how was it different from that of boyar clans? In synodikons composed after 1613, how were Romanov commemorations treated? How was the transformation of a former boyar clan into a ruling dynasty reflected in their commemorative activity? Orthodox belief held that the dead were very much a concern of the living, and so this study will explore how Orthodox beliefs about death reveal notions of family and kinship awareness among the living, especially among the royal elite.

The Study of Death and Commemoration in Muscovy

The general *Problematik* for this study—what kin did one include in a prayer list and why—is one that has been studied before, but never in relation to the ruling families of Muscovy. The field has its origins, naturally enough, in the publication of the sources central to the study of commemoration at the end of the 19th century. The sources published at this time included principally monastic records such as the synodikons (*sinodiki*); donation books (*vkladnye knigi*), which registered donations to monasteries and large churches; and books of feasts (*kormovye knigi*), which listed donations for commemorative meals on the anniversaries of a relative's death, name day, or, on rare occasions, birthday.[8] Interest in com-

(Iosifo-Volokolamsk, 16th century); GIM, Diocesan Collection., No. 411, ff. 19, 139–140, and No. 414, ff. 159–159v (16th century); GIM, Simonov Collection, No. 2, ff. 27–28v, 45, 59v (Simonov, 17th century); RGADA, Fond 396, op. 2 (7), No. 3714, ff. 112–113 (Church of St. Evdokiia, 1633); GIM, Bars. Collection, No. 974, ff. 108v–110v (Andronikov, 17th century); GIM, Diocesan Collection., No. 706, folium 85 (17th century); RGADA, Fond 381, op. 1, No. 273, ff. 31–32 (Kaluga, Church of Holy Trinity, 17th century); GIM, Voskresenskoe Collection, No. 66, ff. 78–78v (Synodikon of Grand Princess Tatiana Mikhailovna, 17th century); GIM, Voskresenskoe Collection, No. 67, f. 8 (17th century); RGB, Fond 304, No. 818, ff. 46–46v (Troitse-Sergieva Monastery, 17th century); RGB, Fond 256, No. 387, ff. 2–3v (excerpts from various synodikons, 19th-century copy); GIM, Diocesan Collection, No. 667, ff. 131–139v (Voznesenskoe, 17th century); GIM, Museum Collection, no. 1343, ff. 5, 16v (17th century). Published Romanov "articles" include: Lund and Okhotina, "Rospis' glavam Sinodika valaamskogo monastyria XVI v."

[8] On donation books and books of feasts, see Shablova, *Kormovoe pominovenie*; Kirichenko and Nikolaeva, *Kormovaia kniga*; Steindorff, *Speisungsbuch*; Kuchkin, "Tsennyi istochnik"; Kazakova, "K izucheniiu vkladnykh knig"; and Klitina, Manushina, and Nikolaeva, "Vkladnye knigi."

memoration sources peaked in the decades before the Russian Revolution, when they were noticed by historians and genealogists working on the boyar elite, and as additional sources began to be published and analyzed, including various monastic documents (*akty*), account books (*raskhodnye knigi*), donation charters (*dannye*), wills (*dukhovnye*), and various land registers that provided rich, though often scattered, material for the study of the members of the early modern Russian royal court. Many of the donors listed in synodikons and other documents are, naturally enough, from the boyar elite, and the fact that the family histories of boyar clans were so well preserved in other genres of historical documentation made for a couple of decades of fertile investigations of the role of class and kinship in the workings of the Muscovite political system.

Soviet historiography paid less attention to these sources and to the problem of death and commemoration in general. Economic class and conflict became the dominant model for historical scholarship in the 1920s and 1930s, and death and commemoration as a discrete topic died a quick and hushed death. What work in this field and with these sources that was done focused narrowly on the biographies of political figures, and was cast as "source studies" (*istochnikovedenie*) as a way to obtain begrudging approval for this work from Soviet academic authorities.[9] One scholar, S. B. Veselovskii, continued to see political relations in terms of kinship (not class) and made vast use of synodikons and donation books in his research on the boyars in the 16th century, little of which was published during his lifetime.[10] A generation later, A. A. Zimin found these sources useful for filling in the biographies of prominent figures and families at court, and he, too, found himself frequently in "hot water," unable to publish some of his best work.[11] As Soviet historiography became progressively walled off from new methodological and theoretical developments in history proceeding in the West, new categories of investigation—the body, gender, death—remained out of grasp and out of favor.

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[9] On the politics and dangers of certain historical topics during Soviet times, see Kobrin, *Komu ty opasen, istorik?,* 131–218.

[10] Veselovskii, *Issledovaniia*; and his personal collection in ANN, Fond 620 (especially, e.g., No. 173).

[11] Zimin, *Oprichnina Ivana Groznogo*. See also Kobrin, *Komu ty opasen, istorik?,* 184–193.

In the 1980s, however, things began to change in the Soviet Union as a growing number of enthusiasts rediscovered the synodikon and the topics of death and commemoration through a growing interest in genealogy. Amateur genealogists and history buffs appeared in the reading rooms of Soviet archives, searching for their family histories and discovering synodikons to be among the best sources available for their purposes. Eventually, the Moscow Historical-Genealogical society would be re-founded (it had been disbanded after the 1917 Revolution), and at least one new journal that appeared in 1993 made it its business to trumpet the synodikon as a kind of lost, and now rediscovered, historical oracle that contained all the genealogical answers.[12] Serious historians took note too. The husband-and-wife team of Vladimir and Irina Dergachev produced a handful of important articles on death and commemoration that broke new ground and reintroduced the field and the sources to a new generation of professional historians.[13] Ludwig Steindorff in Germany built on the Dergachevs' contributions with his own work on the Iosifo-Volokolamsk Monastery in the 16th and 17th centuries—perhaps the birthplace, according to Steindorff, of many of the conventions used at monasteries in the commemoration of the dead.[14]

Today, the study of death and commemoration is alive and well and is pursued by scholars both inside and outside Russia, and the range of topics being investigated is widening. Historians of Russian Orthodoxy, for example, have taken notice of the rich sources available for their researches of Muscovite liturgical practice and Orthodox eschatological beliefs. The view—held in Soviet times generally but also by some historians even in pre-Revolutionary times—that prayer for the dead was rooted more in the residue of pagan religious practice in the East Slavic space than in Christian doctrine and dogma, has now been openly questioned. Recent studies have shown the long and deep roots of prayer *for* the dead in Christianity—and prayer *to* the dead on the behalf of the living. The rituals of prayer for the dead, Orthodox teaching on the role and place of saints (who are not prayed for, but rather to), and the general attitude in Orthodoxy that the

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[12] *Istoricheskaia genealogiia/Historical Genealogy* appeared for the first time in 1993. The first issue of the revamped journal of the Moscow Historical-Genealogical Society, called *Letopis'*, also appeared in 1993.

[13] Dergachev, "Rodoslovie Dionissia Ikonnika"; and Dergacheva, "K literaturnoi istorii drevnerusskogo sinodika."

[14] Steindorff, *Memoria in Altrußland*.

dead and the living together constitute the Church (not just the living)—all these have intertwined to make a strong case that one need go no farther back than the teachings of the Eastern Church, and not to pagan cults, to find the roots of the customs and practices surrounding prayer for the dead.[15]

Economic historians, too, have ventured into the world of commemoration. Recent works on the economy of late medieval and early modern Russia (the 14th through 17th centuries) have found monastic records to be a treasure trove for materials on Muscovy's material culture and economic life. The income to monasteries from commemorative donations and bequests in wills has been shown to be a substantial part of the financial resources of these holy houses. Richard Hellie has looked at commemorative donations and shown the large amounts given by individuals and families for commemoration and the trends in those donations over the 17th century;[16] and there have been specialized studies of single monasteries that have provided clues about the way in which commemoration insinuated itself into the monastic economy.[17] Part of this increased focus on monastic accounts has included new studies of the administration at monasteries. Steindorff's study of the Iosifo-Volokolamsk Monastery showed that not only new procedures for receiving, recording, and performing commemorations were invented there, but that these new procedures may have been later adopted in other monastic communities in Muscovy and perhaps even by the royal chancelleries in Moscow.[18]

Political history, too, has profited from these new avenues of research. The shift in historiographical focus away from class relationships and conflict and toward kinship alliances, marriage ties, and consensus politics has made these sources very important to the study of court politics. S. B. Veselovskii understood this perhaps first of all. His use of monastic sources like donation books and synodikons helped him fill in the genealogies and the biographies of many key figures in the court in the 16th century. These sources also led him to the conclusion that politics was very much

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[15] See Sazonov, "Molitva mertvykh za zhivykh"; and Komarovich, "Kul't roda i zemli."

[16] Hellie, *Economy*, 498–512.

[17] Spock, "Solovki Monstery"; Borisov, *Khoziaistvo Solovetskogo monastyria*; Savich, *Solovetskaia votchina*; and Kliuchevskii, "Khoziaistvennaia deiatel'nost'."

[18] Steindorff, "Commemoration and Administrative Techniques."

shaped by the kinship and marriage ties that bound allies together. While his approach was not much in favor in Soviet times, where the class-based perspective obviously was paramount, there were nonetheless those who picked up where he left off. A generation after Veselovskii, Edward Keenan emphasized kinship and consensus at the court even to the point of suggesting a new paradigm for Muscovite political history by substituting more anthropological models for the formation of political groupings over models based on the state or on class. Today, many of Keenan's early skeptics have reconsidered his views on kinship and politics and come to terms with them, even if they do not always wholly accept all his ideas about the limited nature of monarchical power in Muscovy.[19]

While Keenan, unlike Veselovskii, made very little use of commemoration sources in his own work, both nonetheless understood Muscovite politics to be largely about kinship and marriage inside the court elite. The boyar elite were grouped into factions whose internal links often were cemented by marriage ties. These ties made allies into kinsmen, and kin were the very people for whom prayers were offered. It is thus no surprise that we find family articles in synodikons containing in-laws from other clans, and no surprise that we find entries in donation books with large sums given for political allies who also turned out to be affines.[20] Commemoration lists reflect not only religious values and the general belief in the efficaciousness of prayer for the dead, but also a family's political alliances. Commemorative prayers may not have been the origin of an alliance between one Muscovite boyar clan and another—these bonds were created with marriage, with patronage and clientage, and with intersecting political careers and political aspirations—but it would be rare, indeed, for us not to see these bonds reflected in the prayer lists composed by members of highly placed clans. We thus have in these prayer lists excellent sources for the study of kinship awareness—who was considered kin and who was not—by examining and identifying (to the extent possible) the names listed in a family article.

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[19] Keenan, "Muscovite Political Folkways"; Kollmann, *Kinship and Politics*; and Martin, *Bride for the Tsar*. See also Bogatyrev, *Sovereign and His Counsellors*; and Pavlov, *Gosudarev dvor i politicheskaia bor'ba*.

[20] Martin, "Gifts for the Dead"; Martin, *Bride for the Tsar*, 162–164, 183–184, 195–196; and Spock, "Solovki Monastery, 68–97, 215–226."

The study of commemoration and kinship awareness presents two approaches. The first takes as its subject one or more monasteries for which many of the documentary sources survive and seeks to reconstruct the commemorative activity of donors, and the role of pious donations and bequests in the life of the selected monastery or monasteries. The approach allows the researcher to examine very closely the relationship between many clans and a single or small group of monasteries.[21] In the second approach, it is not a single monastery but a single clan, or perhaps even a single person, whose commemorative activity over many monasteries is investigated. This approach brings the researcher closer to the donors and their relatives, allowing one to peer into the clan's finances, determine the extent and frequency of commemorative gifts and bequests, elucidate the family's genealogy, and provide a rare glimpse into Muscovite kinship awareness. This second approach has its challenges, however. To reconstruct a clan's commemorative activity requires access to monastic records that are often scattered among regional and central repositories and working monasteries. It is a Herculean task, one made all the more vexing by the fact that many of the most important sources for this work are no longer extant. Therefore, this approach has, with few exceptions, been limited to a handful of elite clans and prominent individuals whose commemorative activity is well preserved. Vladimir Degachev studied the well-known iconographer, Dionisii (fl. second half of the 15th century). S. V. Sazonov looked at the commemorations of Patriarch Nikon (1605–1681). The Mstislavskii princely clan has been studied in some detail.[22] The royal dynasties of Russia (Daniilovich, Godunov, Shuiskii, and Romanov) offer similarly promising avenues for this approach.[23]

Commemorating the Royal Dead

Between October 1556 and January 1557, Tsar Ivan IV (the Terrible) commissioned a commemoration list (*pamiat'*) of Muscovite grand princes and appanage princes that was meant to be dispatched to Constantinople for inclusion in the personal synodikon

[21] Steindorff's work on Iosifo-Volokolamsk Monastery or Spock's on Solovki represent excellent recent examples of this approach.

[22] Dergachev, "Rodoslovie Dionisiia Ikonnika"; Sazonov, "Pominaniia roda patriarkha Nikona," 81–82; and Martin, "Gifts for the Dead." See also Steindorff, "Princess Mariia Golenina."

[23] Martin, "Gifts and Commemoration."

of Ecume-nical Patriarch Ioasaf. The source is well known and has been published and analyzed, but it has yet to be studied in comparative perspective—alongside the lists of royalty found at the beginning of many Muscovite synodikons of the 16th and 17th centuries.[24] In his commemoration list, Ivan IV lists members of his lineage: "the commemoration of the dynasty (*rod*) of the pious tsar and grand prince, Ivan Vasil'evich of all Rus', of pious tsars and grand princes of Russia, and of appanage princes."[25] The text is divided into sections. The first section lists ten princely saints of Kievan Rus', all from the Riurikovich dynasty as Ivan himself was.[26] This list is separated out from other names that follow, inasmuch as one does not in Orthodox practice pray for the soul of departed saints since their salvation is already assured. One prays only for those whose salvation remains at God's mercy—that is, the rest of us. And so, the text identifies these ten names not for commemoration (*pominati na panikhidakh*, that is, those prayed for in the *panikhida* service for the dead) but as dynastic saints to whom supplicatory services (*molebeny*) can be offered and for whom canons and verses (*stikhiry*) have been composed.

The other sections of Ivan's commemoration list are arranged by rank and position in the dynasty. Immediately following the royal saints are grand princes of Kiev and Moscow, starting with Iaroslav the Wise (r. 1019–1054) and proceeding down the genealogy of the dynasty to Grand Prince Vasilii III (r. 1505–1533), Vasilii's brothers, his nephew, and finally the Tsarevich Dmitrii, Ivan IV's first son, who died in 1553. After the grand princes follow the appanage princes (*kniazi udelnye*), then grand princesses, the princes of Smolensk, of Tver', of Polotsk, Chernigov, and Riazan'. The com-memoration list ends with a short and selective list of appanage princesses—the wives of prominent collateral members of the Riurikovich dynasty. Ivan's commemoration list amounts to a genealogy by rank, with his relatives arranged by their relationship to the ruling branch of the dynasty and to him.

Ivan's commemoration list poses a number of questions important for our study of royal commemorations in synodikons. S. M.

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[24] The most recent publication of the text is Kashtanov, "Tsarskii sinodik," containing an ample bibliography of studies dedicated to it.

[25] Kashtanov, "Tsarskii sinodik," 51–53.

[26] The ten names, listed in the order they appear in Ivan's commemoration list, are: St. Vladimir; Ss. Boris and Gleb; St. Mikhail of Chernigov; St. Aleksandr Nevskii; St. Feodor of Smolensk and Yaroslavl' and his sons, Ss. Davyd and Konstantin; St. Mikhail of Tver'; and St. Vsevolod of Pskov.

Kashtanov has plausibly argued that Ivan's list may have derived from the "Sovereign's Genealogy" ("*Gosudarev rodoslovets*")—an official genealogy of the dynasty composed by Ivan IV in 1555.[27] A comparison of the composition of Ivan's commemoration list and surviving copies of the "Sovereign's Genealogy" shows numerous similarities. Though there is some variation in the extant copies, the "Sovereign's Genealogy" begins, like Ivan's list, with grand princes, tracing the dynasty all the way back to Riurik (not St. Vladimir). Next come the appanage princes, then the tsars of Astrakhan', the Crimea and Kazan', then the princes of Smolensk, Riazan', Tver', Lithuania, Chernigov, Suzdal', Rostov, and Yaroslavl'. Only after these branches of the Riurikovich Dynasty have been fully elaborated do we find the genealogies of boyar and non-titled servitor clans, arranged hierarchically by rank and position at court. Ivan's commemoration list omits some groups of princes that are included in the "Sovereign's Genealogy," which is probably best explained by the fact that they were not Orthodox (tsars of Astrakhan', the Crimea, Kazan'—who were Muslim), since commemorations were restricted only to Orthodox Christians.[28] It makes perfect sense, then, that Ivan's list is shorter and more selective than that found in the "Sovereign's Genealogy"; the rules and practice of Orthodox commemoration required the deletions. Indeed, even the founder of the dynasty—Riurik (who most certainly was not the historical progenitor of the dynasty, despite centuries of tradition to that effect)—is omitted.[29] He had been a pagan.

Kashtanov, then, is probably right, though we can perhaps go a bit further than he did. Not only did the "Sovereign's Genealogy" serve as a source for Ivan's commemoration list (in fact, the two sources were probably produced by the same scribes working in the same chancellery), but it most likely served as the source text for the standard commemoration section of royalty found at the beginning of most monastic synodikons, and perhaps even for some chronicle entries and other literary sources.[30] We know from a broad comparison of synodikons that a common source text

[27] Kashtanov, "Tsarskii sinodik," 47.

[28] See Bychkova, *Rodoslovnye knigi*, 32–64.

[29] Pritsak, *Origin of Rus'*, 3–33; Pritsak, "Invitation to the Varangians"; and Pritsak, "*Pověst' vremennyx lět* and the Question of Truth."

[30] On the relationship between synodikons and other literary genres, see Dergacheva, "K literaturnoi istorii drevnerusskogo sinodika."

must have been used and copied when new synodikons were being produced in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. We know this because some synodikons include an error that had evidently slipped into one version of the genealogy of Muscovite princes sometime after the protograph was compiled, which then got copied by sloppy scribes into some texts we have extant today.[31] It is certain, then, that a master list of the dynasty circulated for the purpose of commemoration. That master list depicts, in a sense, the range and limits of royal kinship awareness.

Interestingly, the differentiation we find in Ivan's commemoration list between royal ancestors who are saints (and therefore prayed *to*) and those who were not saints (and therefore prayed *for*) is not repeated in monastic synodikons of the 16th and 17th centuries. At the very top of the list of royalty in many synodikons is St. Vladimir, Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of Rus'. Seven generations below him appears St. Alexandr Nevskii. Ivan's list rightly segregates these two royal saints (and the eight others typically not included in synodikon lists) because, as is obvious, saints are not to be commemorated as if their salvation still hung in the balance and could be affected by the prayers of their descendants. In synodikon after synodikon, these two saintly princes are inappropriately placed in prayer lists. It appears, then, that the list of royalty in synodikons represent as much a genealogy—an articulation of dynasticism and kinship awareness—as a proper commemoration of the dead. In this way, Ivan IV, in composing his commemoration list of his dynasty (*rod*), is telegraphing for us his understanding of who was in and who was not in his family.

Ivan knew, as we do today, that all the names on his commemoration list were agnatic kinsmen. This is why the other names and other princes listed on the "Sovereign's Genealogy"—the probable source text for Ivan's listing—were excluded: the tsars of

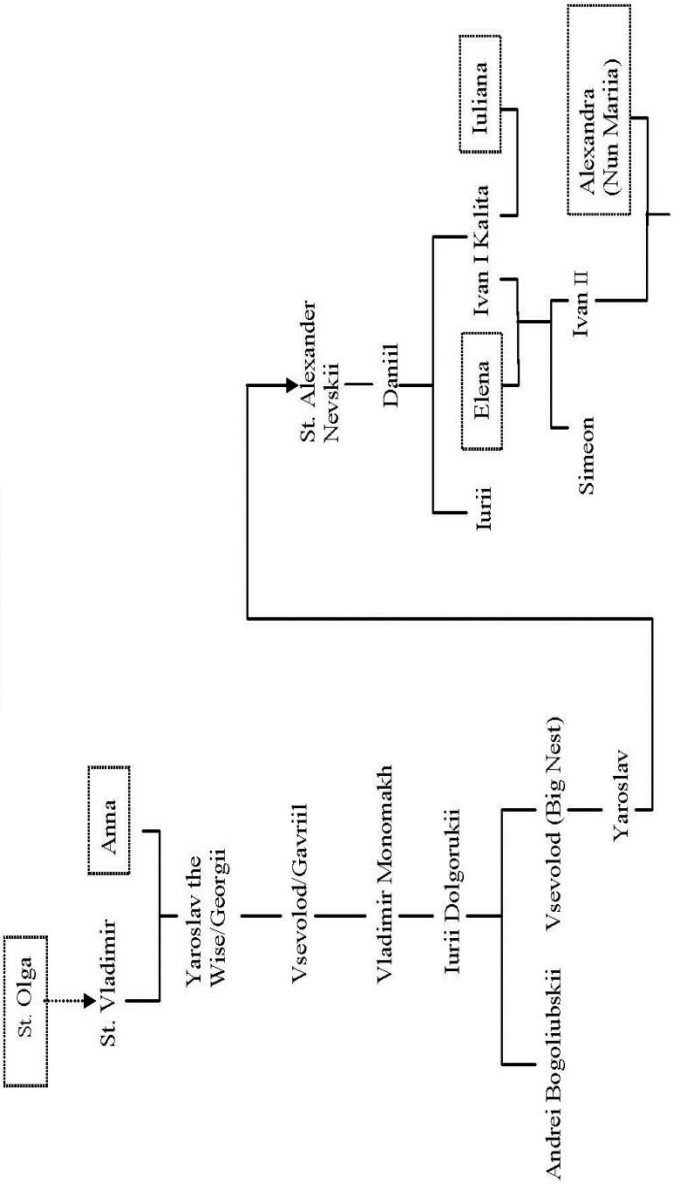
[31] Most synodikons trace royal genealogies from St. Vladimir—the first Christian grand prince—down a patrilineal line of descent to Vasilii III, the last Muscovite ruler to hold the title grand prince before the official adoption of the title "tsar". Some versions (see, e.g., RGADA, Fond 381, No. 274; Fond 396, No. 3714, and RGB, Fond 304, No. 818) insert an extra "Vasilii" and "Ivan" in the list (an easy scribal error to make, perhaps, given the frequent repetition of the names in the Muscovite ruling house). Other errors, idiosyncratic to single copies perhaps, appear as well (see, e.g., the omitted Vladimir Monomakh and the misplaced Dmitrii Donskoi in RGADA, Fond 381, No. 273). For complete and correct examples of the genealogy, see GIM, Museum Collection. 3652; or GIM, Simonov, No. 2.

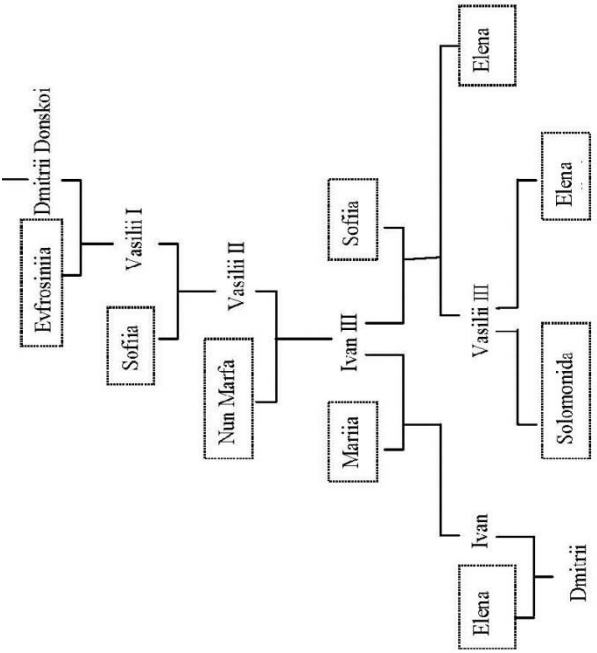
Astrakhan′ and Kazan′ and the Crimea were not only *not* Orthodox, they were not really kin. There is also a very real difference of focus between Ivan's list and later monastic synodikons. While Ivan's list includes branches of the Riurikovich Dynasty that ruled in other principalities (Riazan′, Tver′, Chernigov, and so on), synodikons frequently provided only a lineal list of fathers and sons in a straight line from Muscovite rulers back to St. Vladimir (Table 1). Collateral members of the ruling house are ignored in synodikons until we reach the rulers of Moscow, when we meet for the first time a few collateral members of the ruling house. Prayers are limited to direct ancestors, not cousins once or twice (or more) removed.

The Muscovite focus in the synodikons is perhaps seen best of all in the list of grand princesses. In Ivan's list, we have a genealogically much broader (and longer) list of royal women commemorated than in many synodikons. Starting with St. Ol′ga (d. 962), Ivan's list contains the spouses of many grand princes in Kievan, appanage, and Muscovite times, including the wives of many princes from collateral branches of the dynasty. In synodikons, however, the list of royal women began with St. Ol′ga, "who in holy baptism is known as Elena," followed by Anna, the Byzantine wife of St. Vladimir. From here, many synodikons jump over eight generations of grand princes and their wives to Ivan I of Moscow (r. 1328–1341) and his two wives, then to the wives of each ruler thereafter, down to Vasilii III (Table 1). It is curious to note that Ivan's list presents sainted royal women together with the non-sainted women; there is no separate section for female saints as there is for their male counterparts. In their presentation of saintly princesses, at least, Ivan's list and subsequent synodikons are very much alike.

Ivan was praying for his dynasty, which is to say his family, and he was doing it in a fashion that was appropriately Orthodox. The royal commemorations in synodikons, however, are more formulaic and seem to have had an expanded purpose: not just to commemorate the family of the ruler (in the way that any donor to a monastery or church might request that his family be commemorated), but simultaneously to pray for, and to proclaim, the lineage of the *current* (stillliving) ruler. This may be why saints and non-saints were commingled in the synodikons, but not (at least in the case of the males) in Ivan's commemoration list. These saintly ancestors may have imparted charisma and legitimacy to the

Table 1. Grand Princes and Grand Princesses in Royal Commemorations Selected Sinodikons




Dmitrii Donskoi
Evfrosiniia
Vasilii I
Sofiia
Vasilii II
Nun Marfa
Ivan III
Sofiia
Elena
Mariia
Vasilii III
Elena
Solomonida
Ivan
Elena
Dmitrii

dynasty and to the current ruler. They could not be omitted if at least part of the point of commemorative prayers was as political as it was salvific. Royal commemorations in synodikons fulfilled at least two purposes: to secure prayers for the royal dead, and to elevate and legitimate the current ruler. This double purpose became particularly useful under the conditions of a new dynasty — the Romanovs—as it attempted to establish the legitimacy of their ruling house after they came to the throne in 1613.

Romanov Commemorations

In 1631, Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich Romanov gave his family's Moscow compound of land, residence buildings, and a church located just across Red Square from the Kremlin over to be the Monastery of Our Lady of the Sign (Znamenskii Monastery).[32] For his gift, Tsar Mikhail and the monks commissioned a synodikon, which survives today in two contemporary copies.[33] The synodikon begins typically—with a generalized prayer for all patriarchs, tsars and tsaritsas, their children, metropolitans, grand princes and princesses and their children, archbishops, archimandrites and abbots (*igumeny*), all the orders of the clergy and monastics, and for all Orthodox Christians everywhere. The opening commemorations appear in content to be very similar to the lists in other synodikons in this period, all belonging to a textual history that, as we have suggested, likely began with Ivan's commemoration list in 1556–57.

Close inspection of the Znamenskii synodikon and comparison of it with the other texts discussed above reveals two important findings that obtain, as it turns out, not just for this synodikon but also for many others of the 17th century. First, added to the bottom of the introductory listings of tsars, tsaritsas and their children, in seamless fashion, are the names of rulers that followed after the extinction of the Old Dynasty in 1598 on Tsar Fedor I Ivanovich's death. And so, the "Pious Tsar and Grand Prince Boris, who in monastic ranks is Bogolep" (Tsar Boris Godunov [r. 1598–1605]) is inscribed immediately after Fedor I Ivanovich, the last of the Old Dynasty. Then comes the "Pious Tsar and Grand Prince Vasilii"—Vasilii Shuiskii (r. 1605–1608)—and then the "Pious

[32] On Znamenskii Monastery, see Burakov, *Pod sen'iu monastyrei Moskovskikh*, 260–265; and *Monastyri*, 425.
[33] RGADA, Fond 188, op. 1, Nos. 46 and 47.

Tsar and Grand Prince Mikhail [Romanov]," followed by his children and, inscribed later, subsequent rulers of the Romanov Dynasty.[34] (The two False Dmitriis are omitted, naturally.) Dynastic change is treated similarly in the list of tsaritsas. Right after Fedor Ivanovich's wife, "Tsaritsa and Grand Princess Irina, who in monastic ranks is Aleksandra," comes the wife of Vasilii Shuiskii and then Mikhail Romanov's first wife. The change in dynasties from Riurikovich to Godunov to Shuiskii to Romanov goes without special notification in the text, without separate headings, totally unmarked.[35] In these lists, a clear image or fiction of dynastic conti-nuity was created.

The second important feature of the synodikon (and many others) is that the royal dynasty, the Romanov Dynasty, appears twice in the text. The first appearance is, as we have seen, in the opening royal commemorations. The second is in a family article that follows directly after the royal commemorations, and is labeled, "the Clan (*Rod*) of the Sovereign Tsar and Grand Prince Aleksei Mikhailovich of All Russia." It contains a long list of names: 88 in the original text and ten added later in different hands.[36] It begins with Patriarch Filaret, already listed above among the patriarchs and his former wife, the Nun Marfa Ivanovna. It next has Tsar Mikhail, his second wife Evdokiia (both of whom are already listed in the royal list above), and five of their children: Ivan and Vasilii, who had already been mentioned amongst the list of tsars, and three daughters, Pelagiia, Marfa, and Sofiia, two of whom had been mentioned already among the tsaritsas.[37] Tsarevich Dmitrii Alekseevich and Sofiia Alekseevna (regent, 1682–1689)—two of the children of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich—follow, then a list of Romanov ancestors and kinsmen stretching back generations to the founders of the clan, including collateral branches of the family and in-laws from other clans.[38]

Like Ivan IV's synodikon 75 years earlier, the Znamenskii synodikon offers a view of kinship awareness; but whereas Ivan IV's list offers a purely agnatic, dynastic perception of who was kin, the fact that the Znamenskii synodikon contains two Romanov

[34] RGADA, Fond 188, op. 1, Nos. 46, ff. 1v–2.
[35] RGADA, Fond 188, op. 1, Nos. 46, ff. 2v–3.
[36] RGADA, Fond 188, op. 1, Nos. 46, ff. 4v–6.
[37] Tsarevna Marfa Mikhailovna is missing in the list of tsaritsas.
[38] Tsarevna Sofiia was added to the list later, in a different hand: RGADA, Fond 188, op. 1, Nos. 46, ff. 4v–5.

lists permits us to use the text to see how the Romanovs thought of themselves both as a dynasty and as a *clan*. Nowhere in the Romanov family article does Ivan III or Ivan IV the Terrible appear, nor even Ivan IV's first wife, Anastasiia Romanovna Iur'eva, who was a member of the Romanov clan. Nowhere are Ivan IV's children (even from Anastasiia) mentioned. Nowhere here are Tsar Vasilii Shuiskii or Tsar Boris Godunov listed. They are present, naturally, in the list of royalty at the beginning of the Znamenskii synodikon, but they are not in the family article for the Romanovs (compare Tables 1 and 2). The list of the "Family (*Rod*) of Tsar and Grand Prince Aleksei Mikhailovich" appears to be a family article like that any other family might compose—peasant, priest, or prince—but it is not the kind of list that tsars of the Old Dynasty seem to have composed. That kind of list, which has the form of a structured, ranked genealogy of the ruling house of Kievan, Appanage and Muscovite Rus' is, as we have seen, what Ivan IV the Terrible composed in 1556/1557. In the Znamenskii synodikon, the Romanovs simultaneously appear as royalty and boyar aristocracy.

The Romanovs have a record of commemorative activity that comes down to us today fairly well preserved. Even before rising to the throne in 1613, Romanov ancestors (who went by more than one surname over the generations: Koshkin, Zakharin, Iur'ev) made donations to large churches and monasteries. The Romanovs' ancestors, however they were called, were prominent in the Muscovite court from the 14th century on. The first historical ancestor of the family (setting aside the fictive genealogies—all composed later—that take the lineage back generations further) was Andrei Ivanovich Kobyla, who was already a boyar when he appeared in sources for the first time in 1346/47.[39] From him issued a long and large progeny, with his descendants divided up into separate lines—separate clans, really—all differentiated one from the other: Iakovlev, Iur'ev, Liatskoi, Sheremetev, Bezzubtsev, Kolychev, and others.[40] The clan we call the Romanovs descended from Andrei Kobyla's fifth son, Fedor Koshka, and from Fedor's grandson, Zakharii, and then from Zakharii's son, Iurii. The first Romanov tsar was nine generations removed from the first historical ances-

[39] See Zimin, *Formirovanie*, 175–190; Kollmann, *Kinship and Politics*, 100–104, 211–216.

[40] The best source for the Romanov genealogy remains Selifontov, *Sbornik materialov*.

tor of the family, a scion—rather than the lone line of descent—of one of the most prolific lineages in the Muscovite elite.

The earliest Romanov donation recorded in the donation book of Troitse-Sergiev Monastery comes from 1539, and seven others followed to 1571.[41] Donations from members of this clan can be found in numerous other donation books and other sources as well for the period before 1613.[42] The Romanovs continued to compose and amend family articles in monastic synodikons into the 17th century; the kin that were commemorated before their election to the throne remain on their prayer lists composed and submitted to monasteries after 1613. In fact, the Romanovs cast their net even more broadly after 1613, including increasing numbers of names in their family articles.

Romanov family articles in synodikons in the 16th and the 17th centuries share many features, although no two are precisely the same. Some, like a 16th-century text from Iosifo-Volokolamsk monastery, begins with Andrei Kobyla and then charts the line of descent generation by generation down to Nikita Romanovich, brother of Tsaritsa Anastasiia and grandfather of the first Romanov tsar. Some names are unidentifiable, but the list appears largely to be agnatic in structure—charting male ancestors and mostly male siblings.[43] The 16th-century synodikon for the Dormition (Uspenskii) Cathedral in the Moscow Kremlin contains several entries commissioned by several different Romanov kinsmen. The emphasis is largely the same; the lineage is traced back to Kobyla or to Zakharii, then widens out around the donor to include his immediate kinsmen, both male and female.[44]

A close analysis of the contents of the Znamenskii synodikon and the order of the entry of names into the list provides vital clues about the kinship awareness of the early Romanov dynasty. The list of names is divided loosely into segments. The first mentions Patriarch Filaret and his former wife, the Nun Marfa, followed by the names of their children, grandchildren, Patriarch Filaret's father (Nikita Iur'ev—the monk Nifont), and siblings. The next segment starts with Zakharii, three generations above Nikita/Nifont, and proceeds with the names of his sons and grandsons. A third segment jumps still further up the genealogy to the progenitor of

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[41] Klitina, Manushina, and Nikolaeva, *Vkladnaia kniga*, 98–99 (ff. 352–352v).
[42] See, for example, Leonid, "Makhrishchskii monastyr'."
[43] Lund and Okhotina, "Rospis'," 33.
[44] For example: GIM, Uspenskii, No. 64, ff. 49, 66v, 166v, 171, 201, 286.

the dynasty, Andrei Kobyla, and to his son and grandson. In between and interspersed within these segments—in no apparent systematic order—are other male members of the lineage as well as wives and daughters. The final segment includes a list of husbands, many of them princes, of some of the daughters of Nikita/Nifont and Patriarch Filaret (Table 2).

Important here, of course, are the names in the last segment. "The monk Sergei," for example, can be identified as Prince Ivan/Sofronii Sittskii, who had been married to Evfimiia Nikitichna, Patriarch Filaret's sister. Both were exiled during the Godunov years, forcibly tonsured, and died in confinement. Here we also find Prince Boris Cherkasskii, who had married another of Filaret's sisters, Marfa, and similarly had been exiled by Godunov. We see Prince Fedor D. Shestunov, who had married Fetiniia Daniilovna, Filaret's first cousin; and Prince Ivan M. Katyrev-Rostovskii, who married Tat'iana Fedorovna, the patriarch's daughter and sister of the first Romanov tsar. Many of these names—and others whose exact identity cannot be determined with certainly but who, because of their princely titles, are clearly not blood relatives—appear in other Romanov articles in other synodikons from the 17th century.[45]

To be sure, it is the case that, generally, family articles composed in the 17th century contain more names than those composed in the 16th. It could then be argued that the Romanovs, in compiling the Znamenskii family article and others like it, were merely conforming to conventions of the time. Perhaps the longer list of names in these entries reflects a widening circle of people for whom one offered prayers. Studies of boyar clans in the 16th and 17th centuries do suggest that not just immediate ancestors in the male line, but many of those who shared the same ancestors—collaterals and affines—were increasingly included in synodikon entries for elite clans.[46] This may have been exactly what the Romanovs were doing in their Znamenskii family article.

It is nonetheless a rare occasion when male in-laws—husbands of one's daughters and sisters and aunts—were included in the wife's family's article. It was the norm throughout the period we are examining to record women in their husband's family articles, not their birth family's. This was why, evidently, Tsaritsa

[45] Studenkin, "Romanovy," i–vii; Meshcherinov, "Zametka o dome Romanovykh"; and Meshcherinov, "Novye zametki."

[46] See, e.g., Martin, "Gifts for the Dead"; and Steindorff, "Kto blizhnie moi?"

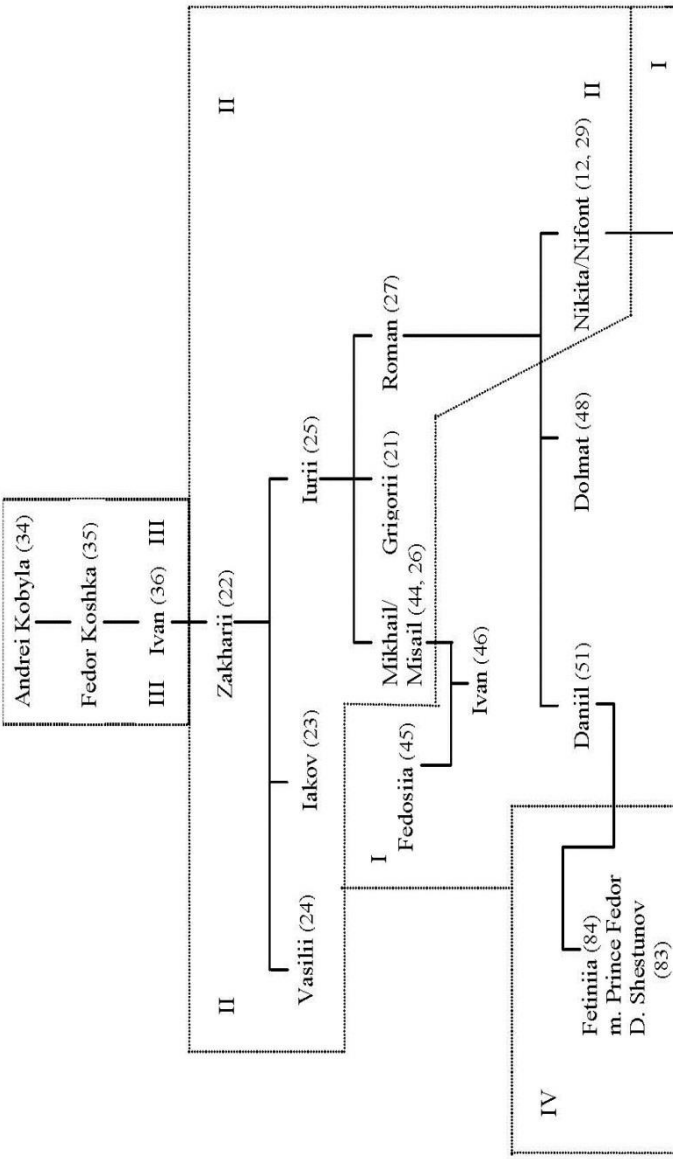
Anastasiia was not in the Romanov family article in the Znamenskii synodikon, but only in the royal list at the beginning of the text. She belonged to the ruling dynasty—Ivan IV's family—after her marriage to him, not to her birth family. Muscovy had a patrilineal kinship system. A wife took her husband's surname; and if he had a title, she of course took the title too, even if the wife had come from the non-titled aristocracy. To find Prince Boris Cherkasskii (and Princess Marfa), or Prince Fedor Shestunov (and Princess Fetiniia) listed in the Romanov family article in the Znamenskii (and other) synodikons violates a fairly well-established convention.

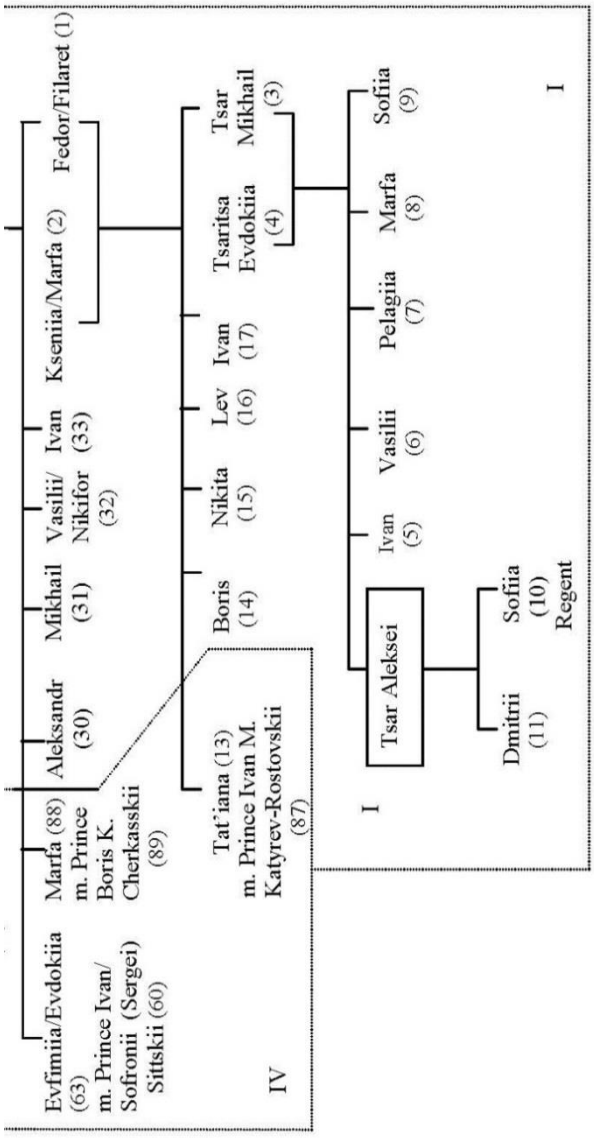
Romanov commemorations must be understood in light of their changing status before and after 1613 and in light of Orthodox belief. Romanov rulers were clearly doing many things simultaneously in their commemorations. They were adding their names to lists of previous rulers, establishing thereby their own legitimacy through prayer for the royal dead. They were also praying for the same group of ancestors they had commemorated *before* 1613. They had to. Romanov ancestors were not the same ancestors as those of the Old Dynasty. They simply could not abandon their own forebears to pray for St. Vladimir (which they should not have been doing anyhow) or Andrei Bogoliubskii or Dmitrii Donskoi, as if these rulers were Romanov ancestors. They were not, and everyone knew it. This may be why the Romanovs continued to compose and commission family articles even after 1613. It may also be why we find family articles for the other new dynasties of Muscovy—Godunov and Shuiskii—both of whom continued to have separate entries outside of the royal listings.[47] Orthodox eschatological belief, then, provides a lens for interpreting these data. The obligation to pray for one's ancestors still obtained for these new royal dynasties. The new rulers could be commemorated after death in the old way (as part of the traditional listings of royalty), but they would also have to keep their family articles current in order to pray for kin that did not fit into the prescribed categories of the traditional royal commemorations (tsars, tsaritsas, grand princes, grand princesses, appanage princes, appanage princesses).

But we may be able to say even more. The inclusion of Romanov affines (Cherkasskii, Shestunov, Sittskii, and so on) may be linked to the circumstances that led to their election to the throne

[47] See, for example, GIM, Uspenskii, No. 64, f. 131 and No. 66, ff. 31v–32.

Table 2. Romanov Family "Article" in the Znamenskii Sinodikon 17th Century





NOTE: Numbers in parentheses indicates order of entry (or double entry) in the sinodikon.
Segments in the "article" are indicated by boxes drawn around names.
Table omits names whose identity cannot be positively established.

in 1613. The 1547 marriage of Ivan IV to Anastasiia Romanovna Iur'eva was followed by many marriages between the Iur'ev-Romanov clan and other prominent clans at court. In the decades and generations after becoming royal in-laws, the Iur'ev-Romanov clan had become not only one of the most high-ranking families at court, but also one of the most well-connected.[48] Robert Crummey has demonstrated that the composition of the court elite remained remarkably stable between 1598 (the extinction of the Old Dynasty) and 1613 (the election of Mikhail Romanov).[49] The Romanovs represented continuity in the leadership in the Kremlin, despite the change in dynasty. This discovery has led to some reconsideration of the reasons for Mikhail Romanov's election over other candidates in 1613, and the findings from this study of Romanov commemorations likewise may suggest a different view. Many of the boyars sitting in the Assembly of the Land (*zemskii sobor*) were Romanov relatives (in-laws, or in-laws of in-laws) and this fact may have had at least as much to do with the election of Tsar Mikhail as other factors that have often been cited, such as Mikhail's youth, the role of the Cossacks, Anastasiia's marriage to Ivan IV and her presumed popularity with the "people."[50] Many of these relatives had suffered exile along with the Romanovs during the dark times of Godunov's reign. The Romanov family article in the Znamenskii synodikon, like that in many others compiled after 1613, may then be a kind of acknowledgement of shared misery (disgrace and exile during Godunov's reign) and shared victory (the election of 1613).

Tsar Fedor Alekseevich's Synodikon

Romanov perceptions of themselves as a dynasty, however, solidified as decades passed and as sons succeeded fathers on the throne. On December 20, 1677, the third Romanov ruler, Tsar Fedor Alekseevich (r. 1676–1682), installed a new synodikon in the Church of the Icon of Christ "Not Made by Hands" located in the tsar's private apartments (*vverkhu*) in the Kremlin. The synodikon

[48] Savelov, "Boiare Romanovy," 233–243.

[49] Crummey, *Aristocrats and Servitors*; and Crummey, "Crown and Boiars."

[50] Various views of the reasons for Tsar Mikhail's election can be found in: Platonov, *Ocherki po istorii Smuty*, 423–433; Stanislavskii, *Grazhdanskaia voina v Rossii*; and Dunning, *Russia's First Civil War*.

was assembled, as the text itself proclaims, "for the eternal commemoration of pious sovereigns, tsars and tsaritsas and their children, of devout grand princes and princesses and their children, of holy patriarchs, metropolitans and of all the family of his tsarist majesty, and of [the members of] his council [*sinklit*]."[51]

Tsar Fedor's is not a synodikon like most others. To be sure, it includes the usual introductory commemorations of hierarchs and royalty, beginning with commemorations of patriarchs, then metropolitans, then tsars (from Ivan IV to Aleksei Mikhailovich, including their male children), tsaritsas (from the wives of Ivan IV to the first wife of Tsar Aleksei, including also their female children), grand princes (from St. Vladimir to Vasilii III), and grand princesses (from St. Ol'ga to Elena Glinskaia, Vasilii III's second wife). After this typical introduction, however, Tsar Fedor's synodikon adopts an unusual chronological structure with an entry for each day of the year and the name of the saint commemorated by the church on that day. But there is more. Inserted in the entries for some of these days of the year are commemorations of the name days, birthdays, weddings, coronations, and death anniversaries of members of the Romanov dynasty and selected members of the Old Dynasty: Ivan the Terrible, some of his children, and four of his seven wives; Ivan's father (Vasilii III); his grandfather (Ivan III); and other relatives (see Table 3). In all, commemorations of various kinds are included in the chronological portion of the text for 39 individuals.[52] It is this group, evidently, that Fedor meant when, at the outset of the text, he claimed to be creating this synodikon for the eternal commemoration "of all the family of his tsarist majesty" ("*radi vechnyia pamiati... vsego ego tsarskago velichestva roda*").

There are, then, *two* lists of royalty in Tsar Fedor's synodikon. The first contains a standard list of past rulers of Kievan Rus', Appanage Rus', and Muscovy up until 1677 (the date of the synodikon). The other contains a shorter list—dispersed among the calendrical entries—of only those individuals the tsar thought of as his "family" and whose name days and deaths would, presumably, be marked privately by the tsar, his family, and intimates. Most of the names in the chronological listing are duplicated in royal commemorations at the beginning of the text (Ivan III, Vasilii III, Ivan IV, Tsar Vasilii

[51] GIM, Museum Collection, no. 3652, f. 5v.

[52] For these 39 individuals, there are 73 different kinds of commemorations: 33 name days, 34 death anniversaries, two coronations, three marriages, and one birthday.

Shuiskii, and so on), but these are far from duplicate lists. Fedor's chronological listing includes two individuals that are not in the royal commemorations—Boyar Nikita Ivanovich, Tsar Mikhail Romanov's first cousin, and Princess Tatiana Nikitich, his sister—and omits all the grand princes and grand princesses of Kievan Rus' (compare Tables 1 and 3).

The opening commemorations of royalty are much like those found in other synodikons of the 17th century, like the Znamenskii synodikon, but the composition of the calendrical commemorations suggests a strengthening of Romanov notions of dynasticism. As Table 3 shows, Tsar Fedor's links to the Old Dynasty are easily traced through these commemorations, and the omission of Romanov ancestors or collaterals in preference to members of the Old Dynasty is in stark contrast to what we find in Romanov family articles. To be sure, Romanov ancestors still were being commemorated through family articles at countless monasteries and large churches throughout Russia. But it appears that, as the New Dynasty became more and more secure on the throne, it persuaded itself that the name days, birthdays, and death anniversaries of Ivan III, Vasilii III and Ivan IV were dates they could legitimately mark, even if only—indeed, particularly—as private, family affairs. The belief in the efficaciousness of prayer for the dead came to be, by the third quarter of the 17th century, a means of creating and reinforcing the fiction of dynastic continuity and legitimacy. Commemoration, Orthodox belief, and perhaps a deliberately flexible notion of who was kin, came together as a means for solidifying the new dynasty on the throne.

Royal Kith and Royal Kin

Of all the clans included in synodikons of the 16th and 17th centuries, the royal family was treated differently. Its commemorations were covered by the introductory entries in the synodikon, not family articles (*stat'ii*). The lists of royalty at the beginning of the synodikons *were*, in effect, the ruler's family article. The ruling dynasty was singled out from among all the other elite clans and placed at the top of the synodikon, not unlike the way we have seen the princely saints singled out from among their kinsmen for separate commemoration on Ivan's list (*pamiat'*). Boyar and other elite families in the 16th century typically made donations for one, two, or maybe three relatives at a time, and these relatives were placed in a general listing of first names, often without any identification of what family the individual came from, and certainly

without aggregation of individuals into family articles. By the second half of the 16th century, the structure of the synodikon changed to include family articles, so that an individual courtier could make a donation to a monastery and submit with it a list of names, sometimes quite a long list, to be entered in the cloister's synodikon in a family article. All this change and development in and amongst the commemorations of the elite had no real effect, however, on the way the dynasty was recorded and commemorated.

There were, however, a few instances where *collateral* members of the dynasty compiled their own family articles. In a 17th-century copy of the synodikon for Troitse-Sergiev Monastery, we find, for instance, an entry for the "Clan of Prince Vladimir Andreevich [Staritskii]" that begins with Tsar Ivan IV, Ivan's son Fedor Ivanovich, his wife Tsaritsa Anastasiia, his eldest son Ivan Ivanovich, Fedor Ivanovich's daughter Tsarevna Feodosiia, and then other members of Prince Vladimir's more immediate family: his father, Prince Andrei; mother, Princess Evfrosiniia; his brothers and sisters, followed by a long list of names (no fewer than 50) of princes, princesses, monastics, and young children—a fascinating list that defies a full deciphering of all the entries.[53] It is a rare instance, and one possible explanation for it may be that collaterals in general—but perhaps the Staritskii line in particular—came to be viewed as detached and separated from the main trunk of the dynasty. Large donations were made by Prince Vladimir and his mother, Princess Evfrosiniia, "for their ancestors" ("po svoikh roditelekh").[54] The case may be analogous to the way the lone collateral line of the Romanov Dynasty was treated after 1613—the line of Boyar Ivan Nikitich Romanov. He continued to make donations and to compile family articles even after 1613;[55] and he, unlike the descendants of the first Romanov ruler, never received the title "grand prince." This branch of the Romanov clan was treated as non-royal, and perhaps the Staritskiis were too.

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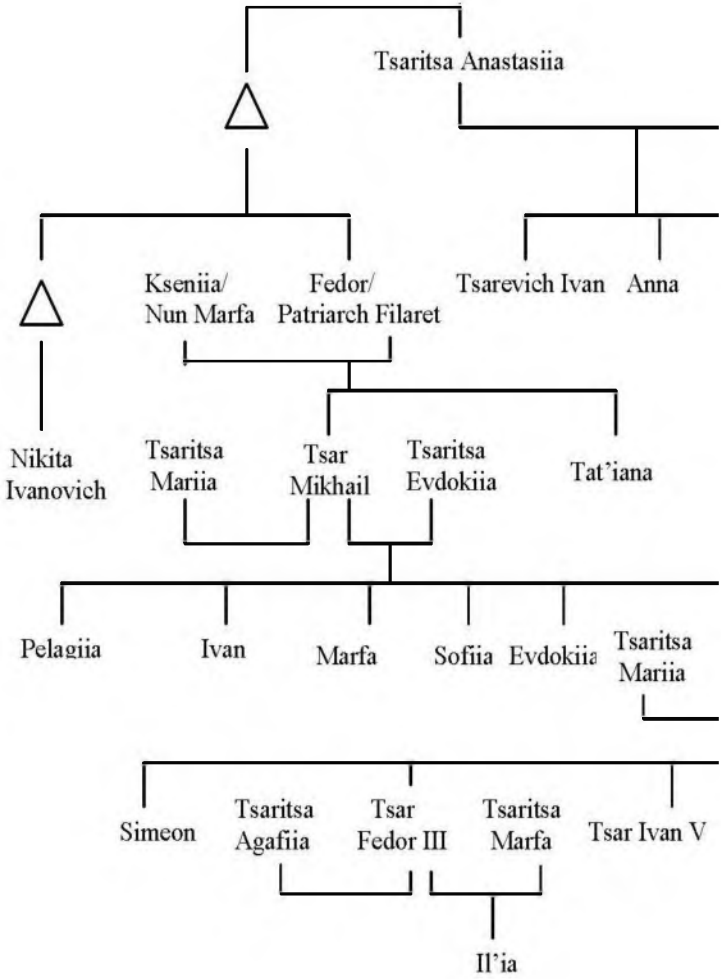
[53] RGB, Fond 304, No. 818, ff. 11–13v.

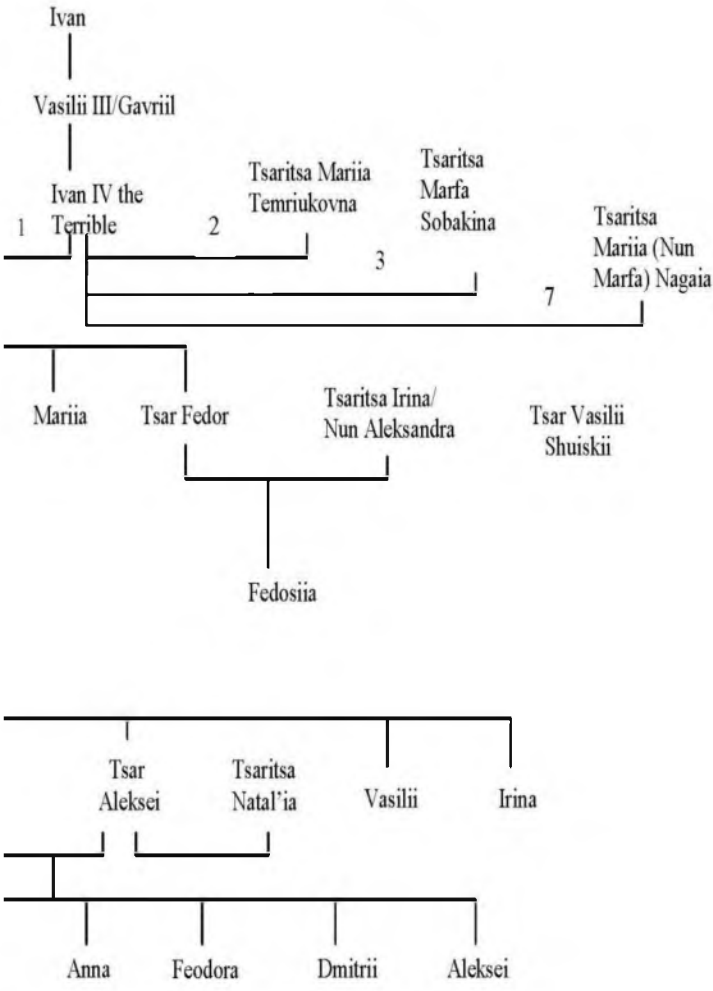
[54] Klitina, Manushina, and Nikolaeva, *Vkladnaia kniga*, 28 (f. 51v).

[55] See the 17th-century family article for the boyar Ivan Nikitich Romanov in RGADA, Fond 381, op. 1, No. 273, ff. 31–32v. See also donations by Ivan Nikitich to Troitse-Sergiev: Klitina, Manushina, and Nikolaeva, *Vkladnaia kniga*, 99 (f. 352v).

Table 3. Genealogical Depiction of Names in Tsar



Fedor Alekseevich's Calendrical Commemorations



It is also the case that Muscovite rulers frequently commissioned prayers for individuals outside their family. Steindorff's study of Ivan IV's donations to the Iosifo-Volokolamsk Monastery shows numerous and sometimes quite large donations made for some of his servitors;[56] and Ivan's "Synodikon of the Disgraced" (*Sinodik opal'nykh*)—which purports to list those executed by Ivan and those for whom, consequently, Ivan himself had commissioned prayers—is famous and well-studied.[57] Later, in the 17th century, it became common for tsars to commission commemorative lists of those who had fallen in battle.[58] Muscovite rulers obviously prayed for persons outside the dynasty, but when they prayed for kin, they did so, it appears, within the rubrics of the formal royal commemoration listings.

If it was not the case that Muscovite rulers in the 16th century wrote family articles, rulers and their kin were nonetheless sometimes mentioned in the family articles of boyars and members of high-ranking clans. Royal in-laws, for example, often included members of the dynasty in their family articles in synodikons. Most of our examples come from the 17th century (when family articles were the norm), but the pattern and purpose of these commemorations is clear. In the synodikon of St. Catherine's on Mount Sinai, Prince Vladimir T. Dolgorukov included in his prayer list, firstly, his daughter, Tsaritsa Mariia, the first bride of Tsar Mikhail Romanov, then the tsar's mother, a distant kinswomen, and only then Prince Vladimir's own immediate family.[59] Relatives of Tsar Boris Godunov and Tsar Vasilii Shuiskii included those tsars' names in their own family articles, usually at the very top of the list.[60] The Mstislavskii princes prayed for their kinsman, Grand Prince Simeon Bekbulatovich, who stepped in temporarily as grand prince of Rus' at Tsar Ivan IV's request in 1575–76.[61] Prince Ivan Khovanskii prayed for his distant kinswomen Princess Evfrosiniia and her

[56] Steindorff, "Vklady tsaria Ivana Groznogo," 90–100.

[57] On this peculiar synodikon, see, for example, Buganov, "K izucheniiu sinodika opal'nykh"; Veselovskii, *Issledovaniia po istorii oprichniny*, 323–478; Skrynnikov, "Vvedenie oprichniny," 3–86; Skrynnikov, *Tsarstvo terora*, 529–545.

[58] See, for example, RGB, Fond 304, No. 818, ff. 243–244.

[59] *Orthodox* Pomjanyk, 20 (f. 10v).

[60] See, for example, RGADA, Fond 188, op. 1, No. 46. f. 6; and RGB, Fond 304, No. 818, ff. 10v, 29.

[61] RGADA, Fond 141, No. 62, f. 116. See also Martin, "Gifts for the Dead."

husband, Prince Andrei Staritskii (Ivan IV's uncle) and their child, Prince Vladimir, and grandchild, Prince Vasilii.[62] In each of these (and other) cases, the donor and the royal person commemorated were related, though sometimes quite distantly even by contemporary reckoning. In each case, marriage linked the donor or donor's clan with the ruling dynasty. These commemorations, then, can be seen as supporting the view that politics in Muscovy was about kinship and marriage. They reflect not only the Orthodox impulse to pray for the dead, especially relatives, but also the attitudes of donors about who was kin and who was not—a determination that may have had as much to do with political alliances as it did with genealogical proximity.

Conclusion: Kinship Awareness and Orthodox Belief

That Orthodox Christians in Muscovy prayed for the dead and believed that their prayers could soften the heart of an angry God is more than just a well-established behavior. The practice ran through the society and to a large degree characterized the culture. Less well understood have been the mechanics of commemoration and the range of persons for whom one prayed. When St. Athanasius the Great proclaimed that praying for ancestors was a Christian duty and that failure to do so endangered one's soul at the Final Judgment, Muscovites, like most Orthodox it seems, paid attention. Muscovites relied on their children to remember and to pray for the departed; indeed, it was one of the reasons for having children. Monks could and did offer these prayers, but they had to be solicited to do so, and no prayers were better than those offered by kinsmen and kinswomen. But the question remains, who were the relatives one prayed for?

Approaching an answer to this question for the centuries treated here poses, as we have seen, enormous methodological problems. Studies are emerging that are beginning to elaborate upon the kinship world of Muscovites but we have to center our focus necessarily on those individuals, families, and groups that are best documented. The work of identifying names in prayer lists is tedious and time consuming. Synodikons are resistant to interpretation, and deciphering the family articles in them requires synthesizing a range of often unrelated sources—genealogies, monastic records, liturgical manuals, and the scattered scraps

[62] RGADA, Fond 188, op. 1, No. 46, f. 10.

of information culled from wills, land records, legal documents, and various court registers. For the lower rungs of the social ladder in Muscovy, these sources simply do not exist and so the investigations must begin with the elite.

Limited though its perspective is, the study of royal commemorations nonetheless throws light on the general custom and practice of prayer for the dead in Muscovy. It was an obligation taken seriously by Muscovites, their royalty included. They spent relatively large sums on commemorations. They were sure to include not only adults or males, but also women and infant children in their prayer lists. Muscovites appear to have thought of their prayer lists in a self-conscious way. They appear to have understood that whom they prayed for conveyed—even if only to God and to some isolated monks—an image of the donor and the donor's family. Most of all, of course, it was a self-image. Prayer lists reflected values—the religious values of Orthodox Christians to pray for the dead—and reflected relationships between the people praying and those, though reposed, being prayed for. In the world of the living, these relationships could have real meaning, as when a member of one family included the member of another in his or her own commemorations. This meaning in the living world was probably true on every social level, whether one was a peasant or a prince; but placed in a political context these prayers could have reflected and reified ties of blood and marriage that were the central elements of politics in Muscovy.

The field of study in death and commemoration is still undercultivated and understudied, but it is not underappreciated. To be sure, few topics in the history of Russia in general, or within the field of Russian church history in particular, are growing faster than it is. The new research in liturgics, in theology, in economic history as it pertains to commemoration at monasteries, and in studies of commemoration and kinship awareness—all of this work is recasting our understanding and enlarging our appreciation for this culture that took very seriously its eschatological beliefs. Having scholars take seriously Muscovy's own religious beliefs about death has been, perhaps, the most important outcome of this research to date.

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NORTHERN RUSSIAN MONASTIC CULTURE

Jennifer B. Spock

The breakup of the Soviet Union awoke a renewed fascination in Russian Orthodoxy that reanimated interest in monasticism and its cultural impact on Russian history. Yet the modern period had produced little rigorous research into early Russian Orthodox monasticism as a spiritual way of life. Among other things, the organic quality of Orthodox monastic life requires a discussion of monasteries' regional contexts and the role of the leader/teacher. Regional context and spiritual leadership reveal differences among similar types of communities (such as differences among various cenobia, or among various sketes) in social make-up, economic function, and even pious forms. Another important direction to pursue is to move away from a focus on one type of text toward the integration of the variety of sources contained in monastic libraries and archives.

Introduction

Monastic life aids the search for a spiritual ideal.[1] Christian cenobitic monasticism structures a religious life for the purpose of

[1] My work on pre-Petrine monasticism owes much to the help of many organizations and institutions. My dissertation was supported in part by a grant from the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) with funds provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the United States Information Agency, and the U. S. Department of State. This

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following Christ and attaining perfect love of, and union with, God.[2] The monastic life helps those who desire this end to engage in pious acts such as prayer and other labors that will lead them to deeper spiritual understanding. The monastic life of pre-Petrine Russia grew out of the traditions of Eastern Orthodox Christianity, specifically the Byzantine models that evolved from earlier monastic communities of North Africa and Palestine. The monastic tradition enjoined its adherents to live lives of poverty, chastity, humility, and obedience in thought and deed. These remained ideals that in many cases were imperfectly carried out despite the genuine piety of a religious community or its adherents. Therefore, the rules adopted by monasteries accounted for the

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research was also assisted by a dissertation writing grant from the Joint Committee on the Soviet Union and its Successor States of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) and the American Council of Learned Societies with funds provided by the State Department under the Russian, Eurasian, and East European Training Program (Title VIII). The Russian Academy of Sciences made it possible to work in various archives of St. Petersburg and Moscow in 1992–1993: primarily the Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts (Moscow), the Manuscript Division of the Russian National Library (St. Petersburg), and the Institute of Russian History (St. Petersburg). Other supporting organizations of my archival work were: the Henry Rice Scholarship from Yale University's Center for International and Area Studies and a John F. Enders Research Grant from the Yale University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. The Hilandar Research Library and the Resource Center for Medieval Slavic Studies at The Ohio State University and the University Research Committee at Eastern Kentucky University have supported subsequent research on this topic. Some of the ideas and examples in this article are also addressed in a recent publication that compares Solovki and Kirillov Monasteries: Jennifer B. Spock, "Monasticism in the Far North in the Pre-Petrine Era: Social, Cultural, and Economic Interaction," in *Monasticism in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Republics*, edited by Ines Angeli Murzaku, 285–307. London and New York: Routledge, 2015.

[2] According to two authors, St. Basil the Great taught that the aim of the Christian life was "union with God by love": Murphy, "St. Basil and Monasticism," 79. See also Morison, *St. Basil*, 22. Rousseau indicates that central to Basil's thought was to "'preserve the perfection of love for God.'" Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 196. St. John Climacus writes that the goal of the monastic life is "to attain to the unity of faith and of the knowledge of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Climacus, *Ladder*, 266. St. Gregory of Palamas represents a branch of Christian monasticism that perceived the goal of the monastic life to be the transformation of the heart, which is the receptacle of grace. Gregory Palamas, *Triads*, 3 ("Introduction" by John Meyendorff).

frailty of human nature by instructing leaders in the proper methods to admonish, punish, or uplift erring brothers.

Cloisters were havens for spiritual seekers and the world's discarded souls: not just widows and widowers, but also the sick, the elderly, and even imprisoned troublemakers. Both lay and religious groups of pre-Petrine Orthodox society accepted the spiritual and religious superiority of cloistered life; yet to a great extent, the monks of northern Russia interacted with the secular world and carried its customs and concerns into the monastery as often as they carried monastic and Christian ideals into the surrounding communities.

Muscovy's northern territories spread beyond the lands previously held by Great Novgorod before it was absorbed into Moscow's grand principality. They included the Obonezh "Fifth" and the region farther north and east that is dominated by Lake Onega, the White Lake, and the White Sea. Monasteries clustered along the lakes and rivers that converged on the White Sea like spokes toward the center of a wheel. These areas encompassed the Kargopol' region along the Onega River, the Primor'e (along the southwest littoral of the White Sea), the Dvina region running along the Northern Dvina River, the Pinega and Mezen' River regions, and the northern shore of the sea from the Kandalaksha Gulf to the east of the Umba River.

The North, peopled by Finno-Ugric tribes, differed significantly from the Slavic agricultural society around Moscow. Monks introduced the ritualized, otherworldly culture and traditions of 14th-century Orthodoxy into the rugged and independent northern society, causing the vital, energetic renaissance of Russian monasticism to incubate in the northern marches of the Riurikid princes.

As the two cultures interacted in this harsh environment of bogs, swamps, ocean storms, dangerous ice floes in winter, and thick forests overrun with wild beasts, the marriage of the strict ascetic monastic regimen with the rough-and-tumble northern population created a vibrant and aggressive mix of trading monasteries that became missionary centers, economic centers, charitable organizations, and outposts for the crown. In the North, especially after 1478, no strong, local political or social elite existed other than the wealthy traders, trappers, and woodsmen, all of whom might engage in the exchange of commercial goods from the region's cities, the catch from fishing, pelts from trapping, and forest products. In the absence of a social or political elite, the

monasteries largely dictated spiritual, economic, and social life in a way that was not possible in urban centers or the more strictly controlled central regions around Moscow. Yet, the story of northern monasticism as a way of life, as a haven for the northern population, and as a network of trading centers with close ties to the northern trappers, traders, and fishermen, has yet to be told in a comprehensive manner.

Some of Russia's most influential cloisters were founded in the North, notably the Dormition Monastery on the White Lake (Kirillov, 1397), the Transfiguration Monastery (Solovki) in the middle of the White Sea (1429–1436), and the monasteries of Ferapontov (1398), Trinity Alexandro-Svirsk (1506), Antonievo-Siisk (1520), as well as others.[3] In time, the founders and a number of the brothers of these cloisters became important pan-Russian saints, and many of their leaders rose to prominence in the church. Yet, despite its impressive list of Orthodox leaders, northern monastic culture also produced many of the *beglo-monakhi* (fleeing monks) who founded and fueled opposition communities in the second half of the 17th century.[4]

The monastic communities of pre-Petrine Russia fell into three main categories: eremitic, skete, and semi-cenobitic. All three forms were important in the North during the pre-Petrine era and often grew from one another in an organic process. The foundation of many monastic communities followed a familiar pattern: an individual searching for a more ascetic spiritual life ventured alone into the wilderness to lead a hermit's life (eremitic). Eventually joined by others who were impressed by the hermit's spirituality and pious deeds, the hermitage might become a skete in which a few pupils lived together with their spiritual father, often raising a church. If more followers gathered and were accepted, the small community might eventually evolve into a large cenobitic monastery with many churches in which monks had individual or shared cells and lived within, or surrounding, a main compound. A monk within such a cloister searching for a life of stillness and greater asceticism might leave the cenobium and venture into the world, potentially starting the process of foundation all over again. Most large monasteries in Russia developed variations of cenobitic life in which a separate cell life was combined with communal eating, labor, and living conditions. Monks who reached a

[3] Overviews of the cloisters and their architectural and administrative histories may be found in Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri*.

[4] See the work of Robert Crummey in this volume.

high level of asceticism and spirituality might receive permission to live apart from the cloister, although under its supervision; such arrangements helped maintain the ideal of the eremitic life while upholding the importance of the cloister.

Monasticism has long been acknowledged as a major influence on Russian culture and society. It contributed to both the mission work of the Orthodox Church and the East Slavic colonization of the North. Monasteries became centers of pilgrimage and local authority. They were repositories of texts, produced leaders of the church, and were economically important. They remained spiritually significant despite attempts to reduce their influence in the 18th century when many religious communities were closed. Spiritual eldering and saints' shrines remained important among the Orthodox faithful and experienced a resurgence in the 19th century. Yet, for the pre-Petrine period, historiography has tended to place more emphasis on the political and economic roles of cloisters than on daily monastic life or on the role of monastic spirituality.

Part I: Historiography

The large cenobitic monasteries of the North, Solovki and Kirillov, created monastic rules that continued to influence Orthodox monastic liturgy and administration into the 19th century.[5] Because they had large libraries and archives that were preserved in Moscow and Leningrad/St. Petersburg after 1917, they have received the bulk of scholarly attention. Their stories have overshadowed those of smaller cloisters such as Ferapontov Monastery, Antonii Siiskii's Trinity and Transfiguration Monastery, and the Trinity Monastery popularly known as Aleksandro-Svirsk, which were closer to the norm in Russia, and themselves quite influential.[6] As provincial archives become more accessible and their tremendous value is recognized, more work on the smaller cloisters becomes

[5] New rules that continued to combine elements of earlier Russian monastic rules were created in the 19th century for Orthodox and Old Belief monasteries. See, for example, Ohio State University, Hilandar Research Library, Coll. MGU Nizhegorodskaia, No. 72, ff. 1v–89v.

[6] Hieromonk Ioan, a pupil of Alexander of Svira (d. 1533) and so from a smaller cloister, became the teacher and spiritual father of Metropolitan Filipp II (Kolychev, 1507–1569) at Solovki. Spock," Solovki Monastery," 346–347. As another example, Patriarch Nikon (1652–1666) began his monastic career at Trinity Anzersk, a skete that became a daughter house of Solovki.

possible. The story of the sketes and middle-sized cenobia must be told before a comprehensive history of northern Russian monasticism can be written. Until then, work done to date on the large religious communities provides initial insights into the monastic life of northern Russia.

The major cloisters of northern Russia sprang up during a renaissance of monasticism from the middle of the 14th to the middle of the 16th centuries. As each community became institutionalized, it exerted religious, spiritual, economic, and occasionally political influence in its region. The economic and political roles of Russia's monasteries have received the bulk of the attention that serious historians have turned on these communities.[7] More recently, the study of religious issues has been not only allowed but encouraged in Russia, but the results have been spotty, with the publication of many idealized or sentimental versions of saints' lives and monastic histories interspersed with serious scholarly work that became possible in the new research environment. In the past, scholarly studies of the religious aspects of monasticism focused on the creation of rules, the lives of head administrators, or interaction with the church hierarchy.[8] Where spiritual issues have been raised, they have often been given a political tinge.[9]

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[7] Works that reflect this tendency are: Nikol'skii, *Kirillo-Belozerskii monastyr'*; Savich, *Solovetskaia votchina*; Zimin, *Krupnaia feodal'naia votchina*; and Gonneau, *La Maison de la sainte Trinité*.

[8] Suzdal'tseva's recent reworking of Bishop Amvrosii's (Ornatskii, 1778–1827) compiled monastic rules and Goldfrank's annotated translation of Joseph of Volokolamsk's (1439/40–1515) monastic writings are examples of the focus on rules. Golubinskii's and Metropolitan Makarii's histories of the Russian Church are two of the best known institutional histories. Syrtsov's and more recently Michels' examinations of Solovki's role during the *raskol* are scholarly works that have focused on northern monasteries' struggles with the Russian Church.

[9] The historiographical construct of a "possessor" vs. "non-possessor" conflict in and between monasteries served to bolster scholarly arguments regarding the stance of the Russian Church and the crown on the subject of monastic landholding. Focus on this construct has resulted in a number of misconceptions. Two of Russia's largest landholding monasteries, Solovki and Kirillov, have been labeled "non-possessor" largely, it would seem, because some alleged proponents of the "non-possessor" camp came from these cloisters. Scholarship of the past fifty years has questioned the nature of such a debate in the early 16th century (see, in particular, Lur'e, *Ideologicheskaia bor'ba*; and Pliguzov, *Polemika*) and even whether such parties existed at all (see Ostrowski, "Church Polemics" and Ostrowski, "Loving Silence").

The issues of monastic landholding and monastic conflicts with peasants have taken precedence over questions such as spiritual leadership, the proper administration of a cloister, moral issues, and the role of monasticism in society.

Another major area of study involving northern monasticism is the examination of saints' lives (hagiographic works, *zhitiia*) and miracle tales. The hagiography of Russia's monastic saints received much attention, primarily for its linguistic and literary contributions.[10] Kliuchevskii, Iakhontov, and Fedotov used northern saints' lives and miracles to glean information regarding monasticism and northern society. Kliuchevskii concluded that hagiography was not significantly helpful in shedding light on the colonization of the North while Iakhontov believed saints' lives were useful within limits. Fedotov was closest to the mark when he suggested that miracles do not give factual evidence so much as they illuminate the concerns and beliefs of the period in which they were produced.[11] More recently, a few scholars have contributed to our understanding of religion and society in Russia by employing the form critical method to analyze texts.[12]

The listing of major trends in the study of the monastic record does not mean that other issues have not been addressed by serious scholars. Yet, there remains a need for an integrated approach to monasticism: one which will use economic, liturgical, pious, and judicial texts; crown papers; pictorial sources; and material artifacts to untangle and re-weave the story of monasticism in pre-Petrine Russia. The perspective of the monks and their society has often been lost in the drive to frame monastic communities as just another category of gentry landowners, or mere

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[10] The late D.S. Likhachev contributed greatly to the study of medieval Russian texts. Relating more specifically to this article, L. A. Dmitriev has explored the northern *zhitiia* as literary monuments (Dmitriev, *Zhitiinye povesti*). R. P. Dmitrieva examined the saints' lives of Solovki Monastery (Dmitrieva, "Znachenie zhitiia").

[11] Kliuchevskii, *Drevnerusskie zhitiia*, 435–438; Iakhontov, *Zhitiia*, 4; Fedotov, *Sviatye*, 54.

[12] Theissen, *Miracle Stories;* Ebbinghaus, *Marienikonen-Legenden*; and Seemann, *Die altrussische Wallfahrtsliteratur*. Isolde Thyrêt examined many northern Russian saints' miracle cycles, Thyrêt, "Perceptions of the Female"; and Gail Lenhoff examined the social context of religious texts in *Early Russian Hagiography* and *Martyred Princes*. To see how this method aids the study of northern Russian monasticism specifically see Part II, chs. 5–7 of Spock, "Solovki Monastery."

extensions of a hierarchical church. Monasticism struck a deep chord in the Orthodox population so that despite the closure of many communities in the 18th century, pilgrimages to saints' cults remained an important part of Russian piety, and a fascination with monastic spiritual fathers continued to meet the needs of a population surrounded by change and upheaval. More work is needed to create a rounded view of specific monasteries so that they may then be fit together to form a whole picture of the role of ascetic life in Russian Orthodox society.[13]

On the positive side, the studies of northern monasticism that have been published so far have greatly aided our understanding of Russian monasticism in general and the socio-economic environment of Russia's North. They are useful since the northern reaches, after the fall of Novgorod in 1478, have received relatively little attention.

Part II: Orthodox Monastic Culture

Muscovite Russia inherited its monastic forms from Byzantium. Eastern Orthodoxy has a long tradition of eremitic fathers inspiring others to embrace the ascetic life. The cenobitic monastic culture as it was practiced in cities or in rural areas was an outgrowth of Basilian monasticism which brought "athletes" (*athelos*—a hermit engaged in harsh physical discipline) back under the wing of the church and made possible the concept of a communal ascetic life lived in obedience and humility.[14] Aristocrats in Byzantium often founded and funded monastic communities on their estates. However, it was not unusual during the Byzantine period for monks to travel far in search of an isolated setting in which to practice prayer and fasting. It was this type of spiritual father that brought Russian Orthodoxy into the "desert" of the northern forests.[15]

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[13] Recent examples of scholarly attempts to understand the spiritual and pious life of pre-Petrine monasticism are: Goldfrank, *Monastic Rule of Iosif Volotsky*; and Romanenko, *Povsednevnaia zhizn'*. Robert Romanchuk has produced a detailed study of the textual life of Kirillov Monastery: *Hermeneutics and Pedagogy*. A few works have attempted to understand monastic spiritual life and integrate it into the social and/or economic life of specific cloisters: Spock, "Solovki Monastery"; Dykstra, *Russian Monastic Culture*; and Miller, *Saint Sergius*."

[14] For an excellent review of the social role of the early Christian ascetic tradition, see Brown, "Holy Man."

[15] On Byzantine monastic forms and founders see: Angold, *Church and Society*; Hussey, *Orthodox Church*; and Morris, *Monks and Laymen.* The

Individuals became monks for various reasons. Foremost was a genuine desire to live a spiritual and pious life in service to God. In this category might be included monastic servants who opted to become monks rather than return to the world.[16] Some monks retired to cloisters to serve God in old age at the end of their careers. Other motivations for tonsure emanated from upheavals such as illness or the death of a spouse. Additionally, the tsar used forced tonsure as punishment. Those who opted for tonsure after a personal crisis have occasionally been portrayed as opportunists looking for three square meals and a secure life. The opposite was closer to the truth, however, for monastic life was demanding, adding responsibilities and labor to lives that were already difficult.[17] Tonsure in such cases was indicative of a realization of mortality and a belief that the religious life was an aid to salvation—yet, a percentage of souls probably regretted their decision. According to their circumstances, it was inevitable that some monks were more committed to the spiritual life than others. Thus, many religious communities housed a mix of social classes and a mix of levels of dedication to the calling.

A new supplicant donated a gift of goods or cash, and then lived in the cloister for a period of time under the instruction of a spiritual father. If the novice was accepted as a monk, he received a new baptismal name and remained under the tutelage of an elder, continuing to fulfill the tasks and deeds expected of a brother. On occasion, the period of the novitiate was truncated or ignored and the new member of the community could make a donation to the cloister, acquire a space in a cell, and receive

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classic works on the "colonization" of the north by Russian monastics are Kliuchevskii, *Drevnerusskie Zhitiia,* and Iakhontov, *Zhitiia*.

[16] In Russia, child oblates were discouraged. However, children could be "donated" to a monastery as servants. These individuals were free to leave the cloister if they chose to do so upon the attainment of their majority or at the end of the original agreement of service.

[17] Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 253. Many who were already cared for by the monastery and eligible to receive prayers after death by virtue of their status as servants or workers at Solovki nonetheless chose to take the habit. It is clear that the monastic life itself was deemed important, not merely the prospect of a secure future. In some circumstances, a life of relative ease resulted, but cloisters removed freedom, and were therefore potentially stifling. In a society conversant with monastic expectations, vows were not taken lightly. For an alternate view, see Michels, "Solovki Uprising."

tonsure.[18] There was no set sum for tonsure, and one did not have to turn over all of one's goods to the cloister. As in the Byzantine tradition, it was possible to receive the income from one's land or holdings until death, at which time the property reverted to the monastery. Much of the literature on pre-Petrine history suggests that many joined monasteries in order to preserve their patrimonies during the violent *oprichnina* period from 1565–1572 under the reign of Ivan IV. However, tonsure was more effective for preserving one's life than one's patrimony since the lands ultimately went to the monastery.[19]

Monks were not the only inhabitants of a cloister. Large communities had servants' quarters and many of those servants were fulfilling specific terms of service.[20] Cloisters contained workshops employing not only servants, but free artisans who worked for payment. Workers and servants participated in the life of the monastery, eating in the refectory and observing customary prayers. *Strel'sy* (musketeers) were garrisoned outside some cloisters, living beyond the walls but involved in their defense.

In Orthodoxy, monastic leaders such as fathers superior or abbots (*hegumens*) and archimandrites were expected to ensure that their communities followed accepted tradition. Correct practice could be determined from a variety of sources, and some monastic leaders wrote new guidelines for their flocks incorporating

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[18] A swift path to the monastic rank occurred most often in the case of old age, illness, or enforced tonsure. Donations for tonsure could range from two rubles to two hundred. A cell space might cost three rubles for one quarter of a small room which was shared with others. Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 192–195.

[19] Emchenko, *Stoglav*, 377. Land once given to a monastery was not returned to the former owners. Although property might later be confiscated by the tsars as they secularized certain lands, the *Stoglav* dictated that monasteries were to take particular care of lands donated for commemoration.

[20] Miracle stories of saints tell of both reverent and wayward servants. One of the best miracle cycles for the life and concerns of a cloister is the cycle of Saints Zosima (d. 1478) and Savatii (d. 1435), founders of Solovki (a miracle cycle for the saints that extends beyond 1645 can be found in RNB, OR Fond 717, No. 955/1065). Many of their miracles deal with the concerns and/or misbehavior of monks and servants. In the miracle cycle of St. Irinarkh (d. 1628), six out of twelve tales deal with the failings and faith of one of the monastery's blacksmiths (see for example RNB, OR, Fond 717, No. 238/238).

customs, rules, and precepts from a broad base of Orthodox texts and practices. The term *ustav* (rule) could mean any prescriptive text for a cloister, but was usually used in one of two ways: as a liturgical rule, for which the Greek term *typikon* (Russian—*tipik*) was often substituted, or as a daily rule for the routines and expected behavior of the monks.[21] The word "rule" can be misleading. It has been the translation of choice for terms such as *ustav* (rule), *pravila* (regulations), and even *obikhod* (book of habits), all of which may have varying purposes. "Rule" has been used interpretively to describe "testament" in the case of Theodore of Studios (d. 826) and Iosif Volotskii. In fact, far more than a single rule was needed for the proper administration of an Orthodox monastery and the spiritual growth of its inhabitants.

In the late 14th century there were three well-known "rules" in the libraries of northern Russia to which abbots could refer for guidance: the rules of St. Sabas of Jerusalem (d. 532), St. Basil the Great (ca. 330–379), and St. Theodore of Studios.[22] By the middle of the 16th century, the rules of Kirill Belozerskii (d. 1427), Iosif Volotskii, and Kornilii Komel'skii (d. 1537/1538) were influencing cloisters throughout the realm.[23] Solovki also had a new rule

[21] A brief overview of terminology and the purpose of such texts can be found in Spock, "Administering a Right Life," 254–259. For a discussion of the historical development of Russian Orthodox liturgical rules see Skabalanovich, *Tolkovyi tipikon*. The instructions and testaments of Byzantine monastic founders are translated in Thomas and Hero, *Foundation Documents*. For an English discussion of the creation of an *ustav* (in this case a testament and a discourse) and of the traditions of Russian monasticism in general, see Goldfrank, *Monastic Rule of Iosif Volotsky*. A number of Russian *ustavy* or their descriptions were published in the 19th century. See, for example, a recent reprint: Amvrosii, *Drevnerusskie inocheskie ustavy*; and Romanenko has a general chapter on liturgical experience in large Russian cloisters, *Povsednevnaia zhizn'*, 147–226.

[22] The rule of St. Sabas has 64 chapters detailing the daily routine and daily liturgical functions of the cloister followed by a full *typikon* for the liturgical year. It did not include the explanations for its daily codes, and in this it is quite different from the short and long rules of St. Basil, which explain the purpose of each regulation. The revised rule of Theodore of Studios went into detail regarding the daily functions of a very large urban cloister. For the original testament of Theodore and the revised rule of Studios, see Thomas and Hero, *Foundation Documents*, 67–119.

[23] These lists contain only the most well-known of the pre-Petrine Orthodox monastic rules. Other writings that could be called rules were known to pre-Petrine monks, and some of these may be found in Amvrosii, *Drevnerusskie inocheskie ustavy*. Kirill's and Kornilii's rules have no known ex-

in place by the early 17th century, portions of which became templates for larger monastic houses.[24]

Based upon the holdings of the monastic libraries, it is impossible to tell if an abbot followed a specific rule or if he adopted a mixture. From the evidence provided by the "Testament" of Iosif Volotskii, it appears that Russian abbots drew on a wide variety of Orthodox religious and pious texts including hagiography to regulate their communities. While they probably tried to adhere to custom, they freely changed it when it did not accord with their visions of pious behavior. Iosif defended the creation of new instructions using the models of Russia's great saints.[25] The Orthodox concept of *oikonomia* (economy) demands adherence to the spirit of Orthodoxy, not just to its traditions, and thus allows the interpretation of texts.[26] In Orthodoxy, therefore, a monk referred issues and questions to knowledgeable elders that were conversant with all forms of Orthodox authority. The role of elders was essential to Russian cenobitic monasticism, which had potential for ongoing reform under charismatic leaders and teachers.

The life of the cell was one of contemplation, prayer, instruction, and learning. Most monasteries had set times when the brothers repaired to their cells and attended to prayers. A monk needed several guides to the spiritual life of the cell. The "rule" of a monastery was different from texts which outlined cell activity: *inocheskii ustav* (monastic rule), *keleinyi ustav* (cell rule) and *keleinoe pravilo* (cell law) could be different texts or merely inter-

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tant manuscript copies, although Kornilii's rule was published by Bishop Amvrosi and is discussed in Lur'e, "Ustav Kornilija Komel'skogo." There is no evidence that Kirill's "rule" was ever set in writing. Iosif Volotskii's writings on the monastic life contain references to the manner of life adopted at Kirillov using language that implies Kirill created a conscious structure that may have been based on a written rule. Later 19th-century rules refer to the Kirillov *ustav* but it is not stated that the intended text emanated from Kirill himself.

[24] The *Tipik Solovetskago* is housed in RNB, OR, Fond 717, No. 1059/1168. One example of its influence on later observances is the *panagiia* ritual, which in the 19th century was primarily based on the elaborate Solovki version of this ceremony (ff. 42v–48). One can compare the Solovki *tipik* with the *panagiia* ritual as it is described in Skaballanovich, *Tolkovyi tipikon,* 51–56: Spock "Administering a Right Life." 259–263.

[25] Goldfrank, *Monastic Rule of Iosif Volotsky*, 227, 229, 238–239.

[26] *Oikonomia* (economy) is the concept that the spirit of Orthodoxy may take precedence over the written law of Orthodoxy.

changeable titles. Customary cell prayers were laid out in one text, perhaps entitled *keleinyi ustav*, while prayers of penance or prayers to ward off demons were in another text, possibly using the same title, or perhaps called the *keleinoe pravilo*. These guides could be found in miscellanies such as psalters, menologies or books of Hours, any of which might contain a mixture of texts for individual pious instruction, the administration of the monastery, the directions for church services, and sermons.[27] These instructions for proper behavior and activities were either read by literate monks, or memorized by rote under the guidance of spiritual fathers.

Often, although not always, a spiritual father resided with a few pupils in a cell within or near the monastery compound. Occasionally, three or four elders shared a cell together. Monks could retain personal texts or borrow them from the library. It is clear from the construction of many miscellanies that monks were expected to read or listen to the texts and to understand them. Often, psalters began with a prayer that asked for help in understanding and concentration or with instructions for how best to prepare for the reading of Psalms. Texts could not be understood without faith, and faith could not be deepened without an understanding of texts.[28]

All monks labored. Prayer and the observance of church services were considered labor for God. Monks and clergy celebrated the daily hours, served the liturgy, and observed more elaborate rites on high holidays or major feasts. They cared for the dead with daily services and yearly commemorations in addition to occasional expensive memorial feasts.[29] Manual labor such as work

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[27] For discussions of the monastic use and construction of miscellany see: Veder, "Literature as Kaleidoscope"; and Romanchuk, *Hermeneutics and Pedagogy.*

[28] Monks developed different interpretive skills from reading alone in cells than they did from listening to a text read aloud, for example, in the refectory during meals, or during the liturgy. Romanchuk, "Textual Community," ix–x, 24–25, 35–36; see also Romanchuk, *Hermeneutics and Pedagogy.*

[29] For a discussion of commemoration gifts in Russian monasticism and northern society see Spock, "Solovki Monastery," especially chapters one to four; and Spock, "Community Building." There are many good works that investigate the meaning of commemoration in the history of Christianity and in Russia in particular. See McLaughlin, *Consorting with Saints*, for the rise of commemoration and its meaning in the west. For Orthodox

in the fields or fishing was also an important part of life. Labor might entail the production of necessities such as shoes or salt-boiling kettles, or the supervision of skilled labor. Monks also fulfilled administrative positions such as the "waker" (*budil'nik*) or the cellarer, or they worked outside the monastery collecting rents, carrying messages, and running errands that occasionally included delivering donations from other individuals. In the North, tasks often carried monks far beyond the cloister's walls for extended periods as they engaged in fishing or trade, maintained warehouses in major cities, and supervised monastery production sites. Even on production sites, monastic discipline was observed, yet it is indisputable that these cloistered men were, by the very nature of their daily labors, often far afield and in contact with the secular world.[30]

The temptation to over-compartmentalize monastic life into liturgical, cell, and work life in order to make sense of it must be avoided, for in doing so we separate text, individual spiritual experience, and community interactions—something no spiritually inclined monk could do. Each portion of the monastic life was integral to the whole. Each individual provided an important element of the monastic calling, but they worked together to build a comprehensive integrated life of worship, contemplation, and physical, charitable, and prayerful work. There were no set forms for how a cloister was to interact with the surrounding community. Russia's northern houses developed a dance that was not always choreographed in which sometimes the monks, sometimes the church, and sometimes the surrounding peasantry took the lead regarding the popularity of cults, the social make-up of the monastery, and the extent to which a cloister became involved with lay society.[31]

Russia see Steindorff, *Memoria*, and his "Commemoration." For the social meaning of commemoration see Steindorff, *Memoria*, Martin, "Gifts," and Miller, "Motives." A good discussion of the care of the dead in pre-Petrine Russia can be found in Kaiser, "Death and Dying."

[30] For additional examples and commentary on monastic business relations with the outside world see Dykstra, *Russian Monastic Culture*, 181–185, and Spock "Giving Voice," 29–41.

[31] Much of the information for Part III and Part IV is culled from this author's previous works which are cited in the footnotes. These works are founded on a broad variety of sources from Solovki Monastery and other cloisters housed in archives or special collections mentioned in note 1. The sources from the 15th century through the mid-17th include, but are not limited to, land deeds, wills and testaments, deeded gifts, petitions granted by or

Part III: Northern Society

The indigenous population of the White Sea region was made up of Finno-Ugric tribes. Few of the inhabitants were Slavic in the early 15th century, so the region did not have strong cultural or political ties to Novgorod or Moscow. The secular community was composed of fishermen, trappers, traders, and producers such as artisans and salt-works owners. Before 1478 some of the northern peasants acknowledged the overlordship of the Novgorod elite who controlled much of the northern territory. However, elite control was lax since landowners lived far from their outlying possessions.

Beyond the lands of the Obonezh Fifth, there had been little centralized control before 1478 and after 1478 there was no local aristocracy to create a rigid social hierarchy. Ivan III turned much of the former Novgorod territory into "black lands" where there were few *pomest'e* (service tenure holdings), but instead, holdings of free peasants who paid taxes to Moscow's rulers for their land or water usage rights.[32] Kargopol' was the only large city north of Novgorod until Archangel was founded in 1584. Therefore, the North did not revolve around politically important urban centers so much as it relied on a network of routes between market-center towns. Since the future cloisters were founded in areas without a local landowning elite and far from urban centers, and since most of the monks came from among the local inhabitants, the monasteries replaced secular landlords and became centers of political, social, and economic power. They provided the defensive bastions and the judicial authorities of the region in contrast to the center around Moscow, where cities and princes (or tsars) held regional sway.

The northern inhabitants were accustomed to a harsh life in the elements, long journeys, little restriction of their movements,

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decrees of the crown, commemorative donation books, income and disbursement books of the monastery treasury, inventory books, liturgical texts, psalters and other pious literature such as hagiography and miracle tales, homiletic works, and prayers.

[32] On the northwestern territories from the 14th to the 17th centuries, see the volumes edited by A. L. Shapiro: *Agrarnaia istoriia...vtoraia polovina XV–nachalo XVI; Agrarnaia istoriia...XVI veka (Naselenie, zemlevladenie, zemlepol'zovanie)*; *Agrarnaia istoriia...XVI veka: Novgorodskie piatiny*; and *Agrarnaia istoriia...XVI veka. Sever. Pskov*; *Agrarnia istoriia... XVII veka*. See also Kopanev, *Krest'ianstvo ...v XVI v.* and *Krest'ianstvo... XVII v.*

and infrequent tax collection. "Peasant"[33] income in the North was surprisingly high.[34] Most families engaged in some farming and almost all engaged in fishing and trapping, salt-production, and trade in forest products or other goods. Fishing and salt-making could be lucrative so that coins as well as furs, horses, boats, boat tackle, and bolts of cloth show up frequently on lists of donations to monasteries.

One Novgorod ruble was comparable to the cost of keeping a family of five fed for a year (117–156 *den'gi*), according to Shapiro. It was worth 198 *den'gi*, almost twice the value of a Moscow ruble (100 *den'gi*).[35] Ultimately, after the acceptance of Orthodoxy and monasticism in the North, many peasants donated large sums to monasteries in this doubly valuable Novgorod measure and the resulting figures do not take into account the large number of gifts of land or land and water rights that were also donated to northern monasteries.[36] The northern population was by no means

[33] It is difficult to find an appropriate word to describe the northern inhabitants. Agriculture and taxes played a role in their lives, but the economy of the north was focused on trapping and trading and was generally free of restraint. "Forest people" might be appropriate but even that terminology poses problems considering the extensive trade networks developed by the population including interaction with Novgorod, Moscow and foreign merchants. Russian and Soviet historians refer to the population in general as peasants, and so this author has chosen to do the same until a more appropriate term is found.

[34] Shapiro, *Agrarnaia istoriia...vtoraia polovina XV–nachalo XVI,* 181. Shapiro estimated that two thirds of northern peasants had 100 to 200 Novgorod *den'gi* in reserve and were therefore well off. However, in other places Shapiro's estimates of peasant income do not include fishing or forest income, which can only be surmised at best. *Agrarnaia istoriia... vtoraia polovina XV–nachalo XVI,* 367. For a discussion of the range of items donated to Solovki, see Spock, "Community Building," esp. 541–545, 552, 554, 555, 563–565.

[35] Shapiro, *Agrarnaia istoriia...vtoraia polovina XV–nachalo XVI,* 50–51, 335. Shapiro estimated that additional income might boost a family's consumption to 165–200 *den'gi* per year. At the end of the 15th century, a war horse cost two to four Moscow rubles, or 200–400 *den'gi* in Novgorod. Even into the 17th century, the value of these recorded rubles as they were calculated in the treasury and donation books of Solovki monastery was the value of a Novgorod ruble: 198 *den'gi* (6 *den'gi* per *altyn* and 33 *altyny* in a ruble). See Spock, "Solovki Monastery," chs. 1–4 regarding donations and Spock, "Community Building." Solovki donation books (*vkladnye knigi*) are in IRI, Coll. 2, Nos. 125 and 152.

[36] Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 131. The income books and donation books of Solovki Monastery show that the average gift from a peasant of the

destitute or downtrodden. Moreover, since serfdom did not take hold in the North to the extent that it did in the central and agricultural regions, many northern peasants remained free, working for monasteries as paid laborers or renting land from them.

The local population was also literate to some extent. In the 16th century, peasants in outlying areas of the White Sea region were able to sign their names to contracts. In Solovki's record books and archives, virtually every land deed from the period has three to six signatures of local witnesses on the reverse. The level of literacy is not surprising when one considers the importance of trade in the regional economy.

Part IV: Northern Russian Monastic Culture

The massive white walls of Kirillov soar above the shore of the White Lake. The thick granite and brick walls of Solovki appear to rise from the middle of the White Sea as boats approach from the west. Ferapontov sits high on a hill commanding a view of the lakes below. These are only three of the many influential cenobitic-communal monasteries founded in the pre-Petrine period by men who, seeking quietude or stillness (*hesychia*) and an ascetic life devoted to God and Christ, entered the forests and became spiritual beacons.[37] They brought with them the learning and culture of the Russian Orthodox Church and in some cases, such as with Kirill, Russia's secular knowledge as well.[38]

These athletes attracted followers, formed small communities of worship and labor, and received land grants from their bishops. Most grew in size, in wealth, and in influence as a result of both royal and elite patronage, and local reverence. At first they built churches and cells of wood and then rebuilt them in stone, adding walls either to remain detached from the world beyond or, as in the case of Solovki and Kirillov, to help the tsars to defend the realm and, therefore, Orthodoxy itself. Yet in Russia's northwestern territories, distance, local society, the regional economy,

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Suma River region was ten to twelve rubles, almost double the norm for the north which was five to seven rubles. Even that lower sum was a substantial amount by Moscow standards.

[37] For a concise overview of hesychasm and its translation into pre-Petrine Russian monasticism see Bushkovitch, "Limits of Hesychasm."

[38] For the role of secular texts at Kirillov see Romanchuk, *Hermeneutics and Pedagogy*. For a comparison of Solovki and Kirillov communities, see Spock, "Monasticism in Russia's Far North."

and a rugged independence gave spiritual life a slightly different bent after Orthodoxy was firmly rooted in the soil.

The advent of small monastic groups in the North was not viewed with complacence by the northern population. Hagiography indicates that both peasants and elite were hostile in the early stages of the process. If the saints' lives of founders reflect the concerns of the periods in which they were written, antagonism from local inhabitants led to violent and acrimonious conflicts. The life of St. Stephen of Perm' (d. 1396), written long after his death, indicates strong local antagonism, especially from shamans. The life of St. Kirill recounts attacks from a "robber" boyar. The lives of SS Zosima and Savatii of Solovki recount the hostility of both local peasants and their overlord, Marfa Boretskaia of Novgorod fame. The "Karelian"[39] peasants around Solovki reportedly bewailed the loss of their patrimony to the monks, indicating some anger over encroachment upon land and fishing rights. Although the hagiography was partly written to win over hardened hearts, that such tales were necessary gives them a ring of truth. These conflicts are portrayed as partly economic—disputes over land rights—and partly spiritual—disbelief in the faith of the monks.

Before the 15th century, most of the population continued to worship powers of nature as they slowly turned toward Orthodoxy. For some time, *dvoeverie* (dual belief) caused the church hierarchy increasing concern. Although the inhabitants had long been exposed to Orthodoxy, they were not necessarily attracted to it at first.[40] As noted above, monastic communities infringed on old fishing and land usage rights, and instruction in Orthodox faith and practice helped eliminate antagonisms over time.

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[39] For disputes and compromises between the northern population and cloisters, see Spock "Giving Voice" 32–35 and Spock, "Monasticism in Russia's Far North," 293–294. "Karelian" was used by Russian colonizers to describe the local indigenous population. It did not refer to any specific tribe, nor did it accurately reflect a geographical region.

[40] Gadziatskii, *Karely i Kareliia,* 16, 42–44, 160. The north has received some attention from ethnographers. Gadziatskii strove to prove that the culture of the northern Finno-Ugric peoples had a strong relationship to that of the Slavic Russians. Among other examples, the monastery of Valaam was founded in present-day Finland well before the 14th century, by which time it had become a major spiritual center. However, as late as the 16th century, conversion miracles continued to be written into the miracle cycles of northern hagiographic lives, and documents occasionally referred to the "unbaptized" inhabitants of the region. On *dvoeverie* see for example Rock, *Popular Religion in Russia.*

Thus, the monks who intended to retire from the world and seek solitude often ended up working as missionaries and spending much of their time teaching others. These hermits were unlike the desert fathers of early Christianity for they brought a complex liturgical tradition, which could not be learned quickly. Miracle tales from northern cycles tell of Orthodox believers who were only partially cognizant of correct practice. One representative miracle from the life of St. Zosima tells of a group of traders who had taken part in the liturgy but treated the *prosfora* incorrectly by placing it in their pockets.[41] There were other tales of traders or peasants needing instruction in the proper reverence for icons. The issue of a population constantly consulting "magicians" to cure their ills speaks of a common problem in missionary work. In the Russian North, however, some of the competition was with other Orthodox saints.

Monasteries championed local saints in attempts to nourish their own cults. Life around the White Sea was focused on the waterways as both fishermen and traders relied heavily on sailing and rowboats to survive. Storms and shipwrecks were constant concerns. Many miracle stories for the North relate to incidents in which monks, traders, fishermen, or pilgrims were endangered on the water or stranded by ice. The miracle cycles of Ioann (XVI century d. before 1533/34) and Login (XVI century) of Iarenga, St. Irinarkh of Solovki, and saints Savatii and Zosima, paint incidents of danger and rescue on the water. Zosima and Savatii, local northern saints, became the patrons of sailors, traders, and fishermen of the White Sea region. Their miracle cycle indicates some competition with cults of St. Nicholas, the Byzantine Orthodox patron of fishermen and another popular saint in the North. In the cycle of Zosima and Savatii, there are five tales that tell how someone associated with a church of St. Nicholas, or searching for a cure from St. Nicholas, had to turn to Savatii or Zosima to find

[41] "Zhitie i podvizi," 528–529. Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 134. In Russian Orthodoxy the Eucharist (sacrifice) is performed with leavened loaves that have been blessed by the priest and are called *prosfora*. The sacrifice comes from pieces cut from a cross that is formed in the center of the loaves and is called the Lamb (*agnits*). The entire loaf is blessed before the liturgy, and that part not used for the sacrifice (also called *prosfora*) is distributed to the congregation after the service.

relief. As recorders of these tales, the monks cultivated competition and regionalism.[42]

One might attempt to understand events such as competition with St. Nicholas or the creation of new Russian saints in terms of national cults, as Fedotov argues throughout his work on Russia's saints. However, other evidence shows a sense of regionalism rather than national feeling. Bushkovitch examines the hypothesis that to some extent, the church hierarchy in Moscow supported the rise of local cults in order to placate and strengthen ties with the northern region.[43] Zosima and Savatii, who came from northern cities and monasteries, were far more popular within the Solovki Monastery than Solovki's own long-time abbot and the Metropolitan of all Russia, Filipp II. St. Filipp had lived at Solovki for over ten years before becoming abbot in 1546. He led the cloister for 20 years, during which time Solovki expanded and replaced its wooden structures with stone. Filipp became Metropolitan of Russia in 1566 but after a few years he was imprisoned and then executed by order of Ivan IV. His body was first interred in Tver' and then transferred to Solovki in the late 17th century by which time the monastery had developed a new custom of collecting cash offerings at saints' shrines.

Beginning in 1579, coin offerings for prayer could be deposited in vessels atop the tombs of Zosima and Savatii. A similar pitcher was placed upon Filipp's tomb after his relics were translated to Solovki, but despite his great service and leadership at Solovki, he was not a popular figure in that region. Fifty years after the transfer of his relics to Solovki and almost 80 years after his death, in a treasury income book that contained two annual entries from November 1644 to November 1645, only 22 rubles total were left as gifts at Filipp's tomb over two full pilgrimage seasons, while 1,558 rubles were deposited at the tombs of Zosima and

[42] Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 400–402. For the specific tales, see "Zhitie i podvizi," 579–581, and RNB, OR, Fond 717, No. 955/1065, ff. 281–286, 289–294, 295–299, 299–302v.

[43] Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, 81, 88–89; Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 71–72. Bushkovitch noted the preponderance of northern saints who were recognized by the church council of 1547. There are other factors that might affect the decision to honor northern saints, notably Metropolitan Makarii's former position as Archbishop of Novgorod, and the political events of the mid-16th and early 17th centuries.

Savatii in the same period.[44] Filipp, a major figure of Russian Orthodoxy who had attempted to oppose the power of the center (according to the hagiography of the time), could not compete in his own monastery with its local saintly founders, who were perceived as the protectors of the local population. The North maintained strong regional ties in many of its manifestations of Orthodox practice.

The majority of monks in the northern monasteries were non-elite northern inhabitants.[45] Child oblates were not allowed in Russian Orthodoxy, and so it was unusual for a young person to be tonsured.[46] Most monks had reached maturity when they donned a frock so they brought a trade or skill to the community as well as the bad habits of a lifetime. Certainly most individuals who accepted tonsure understood its pious and spiritual value and probably tried very hard to live a correct life. However, there were enough older men who entered the brotherhood after the death of a spouse or after an illness to make up a sizeable number and the change in behavioral expectations would have been considerable. A large group of mature pre-Petrine trappers and traders from the rough northern towns and villages could hardly have been demure, retiring, sophisticated men who could resolve all their issues and disputes through discourse without physical or verbal confrontations, whatever their acquired ideals might be. The habits of a lifetime must have been hard to break. Nevertheless, these men benefitted the cloisters because their skills and experience fit the needs of Solovki, Kirillov, or other monasteries as they strove to grow and prosper.

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[44] Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 174–175, 344, and Appendix B, which shows the figures for multiple years of donations at the tombs of the saints (pp. 448–450). See pages 344–357 for Filipp's relationship with Solovki and attempts to found a cult for him there. The figures for donations at the tombs can be found in the monastery's income books located in RGADA, Fond 1201, opis' 1, starting in 1579. For the years 1644–1645 specifically the entries are in No. 242: see for example ff. 2v–3.

[45] Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 181–182.

[46] One little-known saint's life from Solovki reads as a report on the death of a hermit, Nikifor (d. 1615). Nikifor had been a servant at the cloister in his youth but was refused tonsure on account of his young age. He ran away from the cloister to live alone in the woods on the island. Despite many hardships, he eventually made the transition to a proper hermit. He was tonsured by the monastery a few years before his death. Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 357–365.

Because agriculture was less productive in the White Sea region, northern Russian monasteries also became centers of trade. This does not merely mean that the local population came to the monastery to sell its grain and goods. Solovki, Kirillov, Alexandro-Svirsk, and other monasteries maintained warehouses in major cities such as Moscow, Archangel, and Kargopol'. Here they sold the fish and salt that had been produced at monastery production sites (*sluzhby*). They then bought and sold other goods for the purpose not only of maintaining their communities, but also of profit, which would benefit both the treasury and charitable activities.

The monasteries provided prominent and permanent structures for the exchange of goods and they were desirable trading partners. A cloister fed many mouths and so needed to buy agricultural products that they could not necessarily produce in adequate quantities in the far north.[47] Moreover, large, established monasteries did not die out. They did not move or go bankrupt. Although they occasionally were at the mercy of the Swedish armies that swept through the region, in general their storehouses were safe and their businesses protected by powerful patron saints. The trading and production economy of the northern cloisters provided dependable centers for exchange and lending within northern socio-economic conditions. Many monks and servants who directed these trade and production centers were themselves accomplished fishermen, salt-boilers and traders who had long maintained their families at these occupations before receiving tonsure. This probably accounts for the unusual custom at Solovki that allowed monks to keep some of their personal cash and other belongings in their cells.[48] The monasteries gained their economic and spiritual strength directly from the local peasantry.

The economic patterns of the North were altered by the growth of large monastic production, trapping, and trading entities. Cloisters and peasants (often relatives or personal acquaintances of the monks) frequently resolved land or tax disputes through

[47] One exception to this northern problem of poor agricultural return for labor was along the lower reaches of the Northern Dvina River where a milder climate and good soil provided relatively rich harvests.

[48] Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 187–188, 198–199. The monastery's prescriptive arrangements for the disbursement of cash and other personal property of a deceased monk for the purpose of commemorative prayers are in RNB, OR, Fond 717, No. 1059/1168 (*Tipik Solovetskago*), ff. 94–95.

compromises that split responsibility. It was not unusual for monasteries to pay obligations to local communities or to the tsar. One way of resolving land disputes was for the cloisters to pay part of the tax on the portions where they received their catch and thus avoid conflicts over remote fishing areas.[49] Disputes with monasteries often involved their peasants over land or water usage rights.

Generally speaking, in the North, at the time of tonsure a monk donated cash rather than land. Thus, the concept of receiving an income from landholdings gifted to the cloister does not appear to have been a common practice in the far North (although Kirillov, which had a larger proportion of elite tonsured, may have been an exception). The peasantry held much of its wealth in production and trapping rights and some in acreage. Land rights conferred permission to fish in certain waters or to produce (trap or make salt) on specific portions of land. Such donations were a show of faith for while few donors requested tonsure in return for land, about half the non-elite land donations contained requests for prayers.[50] Local inhabitants did embrace the practice of commemorative prayer and made substantial cash donations to northern cloisters for memorials. Five rubles from a peasant family was not unusual, and often much larger sums were disbursed.

Thanks to an increase in gifts and purchases of land which began in the 1570s and to the energetic efforts of northern monks, by the early 17th century Solovki, Kirillov, and other northern monasteries owned the majority of the salt-production sites in the North. They also owned extensive fishing rights, and even much arable land. This renders ludicrous a frequent assertion that the two cloisters belonged to a so-called non-possessor "camp" within the Russian Church (if such a camp existed). However, there is some validity in the argument that, despite their size, the two communities remained dedicated to the ascetic ideal. Many proponents of the eremitic discipline, most notably Nil Sorskii, came from large northern cloisters. In fact, the evidence would indicate

[49] Liberzon, *Akty...1479–1571*, 183–184. Liberzon, *Akty...1572–1584*, 139. For a discussion of such compromises see Spock, "Giving Voice," 32–35.

[50] Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 113, 155, 233–236. Many gifts were for tonsure, the majority of which were cash. See also Spock, "Community Building," 549–553.

that rather than having an official stance on the subject of the proper structure of a monastic community, the great northern cloisters were split in their thinking on the issue.[51]

Obedience may have been a monastic virtue, but indications are that it often went by the wayside.[52] It was not an easy task to control hundreds of monks and servants, some of whom were prisoners, some of whom had accepted tonsure in times of crisis, and most of whom had grown up in the forest culture. Abbot Irinarkh of Solovki despaired of bringing harmony to his flock and resigned, thus initiating a period of turmoil and a lengthy lacuna in the leadership of the cloister. The problem appears to have been a dispute over whether the leader of the community should be an ascetic or an administrator. The two candidates were Eleazar Anzerskii (d. 1656), an ascetic, and Makarii, an administrator. Practicality and administration won as Makarii was finally installed as hegumen, but the disagreement over the meaning and leadership of the monastic life was a protracted and fierce debate among the monks.[53] It is quite possible that such a debate raged over the ownership and administration of property, as those who were inclined to the eremitic life took issue with others who perceived their role as one of responsibility to the community to perform prayer, to administer properties given into their care, to provide charity, to provide a place for novitiates, and to maintain trade relations.[54]

Internal disputes could explode in violence which was patently antithetical to the monastic calling.[55] And yet, if one considers the population that inhabited the cloisters, this is less shocking than at first glance. The northern trading and trapping society did not breed cultured individuals with highly ritualized manner-

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[51] See the discussion of Irinarkh's successor below. There is much more work to be done on the problem of leadership within the large Orthodox cloisters.

[52] Michels, "Solovki Uprising," 7–9; Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 391–393.

[53] Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 343, 367–373. See RNB, OR, Fond 717, No. 238/238, *Zhitie...Irinarkha*; and Spock, "Administering a Right Life," 158–159.

[54] In addition to evidence from Solovki outlined above, Dykstra has found tensions between the spiritual and administrative life in the Joseph-Volokolamsk Monastery and disagreement on the level of charity owed to the surrounding community: *Russian Monastic Culture*, 220–227.

[55] Michels, "Solovki Uprising," 7–9.

isms. In a woodsman's world, the one who can carry the greatest weight is an important person. In the forest, a struggle against the elements, bandits, and wolves breeds a tough and rugged individual. As a contrast, Solovki, Kirillov, Ferapontov, and the other influential cloisters provided learning, liturgy, and role-modeling for the monks and servants in their care. However, many of their flock spent much time outside the cloister walls interacting with the roughened northern society. A belief in God and Christ remained paramount, but quick physical solutions to immediate problems must have been tempting in the life of a fisherman-trader-monk. The monastic life of contemplation was intertwined with a rugged individualism that aided survival in the elements. The ethereal beauty of the liturgy was a contrast to the stark wilderness, the dangerous labor, and the tough population. In such conditions, *oikonomia* was important for adapting Orthodox precepts to a broad range of temporal and spiritual problems.

Charity was an important role for all Christian monasteries. In the Russian North, charity for all—men or women, rich or poor—linked the needs of the secular community with its support of the cloister. As part of their charitable role, Russia's monasteries allowed women to enter for specific purposes. Miracle tales of Solovki's founders show that women were allowed into the monastic compound to visit the shrines, although all of the instances are specifically for healing.[56] Solovki had the wealth to offer more charity for commemorative prayer than many other cloisters. In addition to giving three free years of commemoration to all monks, it also granted the same gift to any lay person (*mirianin*)—servant, visitor, or pilgrim—who died while on the monastery's premises or landholdings ("where there is monastery service"). Thus monks who died in the monastery or servants or visitors who died at one of its salt production sites were equally eligible for three years of daily commemoration.[57] This provision of the *ustav* that was appended to the *Tipik Solovetskago* is perhaps one of the best

[56] Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 394–395, 401. This is true of other cloisters as well. The "Testament" of Iosif Volotskii revises the hegumen's earlier proscription against women in the monastery in favor of allowing them entry under special circumstances. Goldfrank, *Monastic Rule of Iosif Volotskii*, 160–161, 220–221, 292.

[57] RNB, OR, Fond 717, No. 1059/1168 *Tipik Solovetskago*, f. 94v. On the same folio is the instruction that if the deceased had given a gift, its value went toward additional prayers beyond the 3-year minimum.

examples of the confluence of the North's riches, its dangers, its relative social egalitarianism and its spirituality. It gave a person a place to die in peace with the knowledge that commemoration would be covered. The outlay of money for so many people was extraordinary, but it was supportable, and evidently desirable that servants and visitors be granted the same consideration in commemoration as the monks.

The northern cloisters were indeed wealthy landowners, traders, and producers, and occasionally hotbeds of controversy, but they were also repositories of spirituality and northern culture. Prayerful, practical, and pugnacious, many northern monks in the late 17th century were just as willing to oppose the lay and church elite of Moscow as they were to oppose one another. Their origins made them tough and adventurous; their faith made them zealous. The hardships of the monastic life were no more daunting than the rigors of survival in the northern wilderness. The cloisters tapped the wealth of the region's natural resources with the help of the population. Endangered by the complacency of wealth and success, Russia's northern monasteries nonetheless retained a commitment to the ascetic life and to the care of the community as individuals and as a group. For these reasons they remained lodestones for the Orthodox faithful, drawing pilgrims from all over the Orthodox world, despite their modest beginnings and humble occupants.

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BETWEEN FORGIVENESS AND INDULGENCE: FUNERARY PRAYERS OF ABSOLUTION IN RUSSIA

Nikolaos Chrissidis

The custom of placing a written prayer of absolution in the hands of the deceased right before burial is attested in Russia since medieval times. The text of the prayer varied even after the appearance of printed liturgical books. The essay analyzes the text of the prayer as it crystallized by the 19th century (and is in use to this day) and compares it to Eastern Orthodox synchōrochartia *(patriarchal letters of absolution). The conclusion is that since the late 19th century (if not before) Russians have been buried with an Eastern Orthodox indulgence.*

When Tsar Fedor Alekseevich died on 27 April 1682, the funeral rites were conducted by Patriarch Ioakim (in office 1674–1690) with all the customary pomp and circumstance befitting the exalted deceased. Towards the end of the burial rite, and just before the interment of the body in the Archangel Michael Cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin, Patriarch Ioakim deposited a prayer of absolution (*molitvu proshcheniia*) into the hands of the departed. Shortly thereafter the body was carried to its final resting place.[1] Ioakim's last action reflected an ancient Russian custom, which gave the

[1] "O prestavlenii i pogrebenii Gosudaria Tsaria i Velikogo Kniazia Feodora Alekseevicha," 211–212.

Tapestry of Russian Christianity: Studies in History and Culture. Nickolas Lupinin, Donald Ostrowski and Jennifer B. Spock, eds. Columbus, Ohio: Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures and the Resource Center for Medieval Slavic Studies, The Ohio State University, 2016, 261–293.

spiritual father (or presiding clergyman) a last opportunity to plead for divine pardon on behalf of the dead person through a written prayer. Known variously as "prayers of absolution" (*razreshitel'nye* or *razreshchal'nye* or *proshchal'nye molitvy*),[2] these absolutory texts were included in manuscript and printed service books (*trebniki*, lit. 'books of needs'; sing. *trebnik*) within or immediately after the burial rite.[3] The practice has continued to this day and remains characteristic of the burial practices of the Russian Orthodox Church.[4]

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[2] See Brokgauz-Efron, *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'*, vol. 26, s.v. "razreshitel'naia molitva." For a discussion of absolution prayers during burial from both an historical and a doctrinal perspective, see Prilutskii, *Chastnoe bogosluzhenie*, esp. 253–259; Bulgakov, *Nastol'naia kniga*, 2: 1357–1359; and Almazov, *Tainaia ispoved'*, 2: 264–271 and 314–318. See also appendix B at the end of this essay for a copy of the prayer as used today in the Russian Orthodox Church.

[3] Several accounts by foreigners noted the practice. See, e. g., Olearius, *The Travels*, 275. Olearius adds that the prayer sheets were purchased: ibid., 276. Following is the text in his account: "We, N.N. bishop and priest here in N., do hereby acknowledge and witness that [the deceased] actually lived among us as a genuine, righteous Greek Christian. Though he sometimes sinned, he nevertheless repented of his sins, and received absolution and Holy Communion for forgiveness. He revered God and His saints, and fasted and prayed fittingly. With me, N.N., his confessor, he was fully reconciled, and I forgave him all his sins. Therefore, we have issued him this passport to show to St. Peter and the other saints that he may be admitted without hindrance to the gates of bliss." Olearius's text does not appear to coincide with any of the relevant prayers. This version, however, appeared in several other foreigners' accounts. See, for example, *Posol'stvo Kunraada fan Klenka*, 142–143 (for the Dutch original); 437 (for the text in Russian translation). As early as 1526, Johannes Faber (Johann Fabri, 1478–1541) had claimed that the Muscovites used indulgences: *Moscouitarum religio*, no pagination (my thanks to Jonathan Seiling for pointing out Faber's reference). Almazov suggests that Faber probably confused Western indulgences with the Russian *razreshitel'nye molitvy*. See *Soobshcheniia*, 40. Faber had never been to Russia and acquired his information from Russian ambassadors. Several scholars have noted that, as a sworn enemy of Protestantism, Faber deliberately downplayed some differences between Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy. Seiling points out Faber's mistakes and exaggerations, emphasizes the political motivations behind his work and concludes that his portrayal of Muscovite religion was "a counter-reformer's dream come true": "The Political and Polemical," 666. Cf. also Kämpfer, "Herbersteins."

[4] And also in parts of Ukraine. See Worobec, "Death Ritual," 26.

Until the middle of the 17th century, the content of burial absolutory prayers to be placed in the hands of the dead appeared in several variants[5] and it remains unclear when, exactly, the text crystallized in the form that is known from 19th-century service books. Some scholars have argued that the adoption of this form must have occurred in the second half of the 17th century.[6] As we shall have occasion to see, such a view appears plausible, but it requires close study of published service books from the late-17th through the 19th century to be corroborated. Leaving aside the question of the exact timing of the appearance of the standardized version of this prayer, this essay conducts a close study of its content and the question of its textual origins. My aims are twofold: 1) to offer an analysis of this prayer in its 19th-century form (in use to this day); and 2) to discuss the prototype of the standardized text by comparing it with Eastern Orthodox patriarchal letters of absolution.

The *Razreshitel'naia Molitva* in the 19th Century

The text in question as attested in 19th-century service books is the following:

> Our Lord, Jesus Christ, by His divine grace, gift, and authority, given to His holy disciples and apostles, to bind and loose the sins of humans, having said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit.

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[5] See, e.g., GIM, Synodal Collection, No. 378 (898): 16th c. *Trebnik*, ff. 392–393. The *Trebnik mirskoi* of 1639 includes a prayer specifically destined to be placed in the hands of the deceased, whether a lay person or a priest. The instructions note that the spiritual father reads the absolutory prayer in secret (*v tai*) and then places it in the hands of the departed. See *Trebnik mirskoi*, f. 295 (the prayer follows the instructions and is identical to the one found in the *Trebnik inocheskii*, ff. 208–209).

[6] Cf. the comments of Bulgakov, *Nastol'naia kniga* 2: 1357–1359, and Almazov, *Tainaia ispoved'* 2: 274. A random check of the *trebnik* editions of 1680, 1688, 1697, 1763, 1785 confirms that they do not mention the custom of placing the prayer in the dead person's hands. One possibility is that the custom was so widespread that there was no need to refer to it. Another is that since Greek *euchologia* (books of prayers) did not include the practice, the correctors dropped it during the liturgical reforms of the mid-17th c. For a discussion of the changes to, or omissions of, absolutory prayers (but not necessarily those to be placed in the hands of the dead) during the revision of liturgical books in the mid-17th c., see Sazonova, *U istokov*, 59–60, 212.

> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain them, they are retained." [John 20: 22–23]. "Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." [Matthew 18: 18]. And because this divine Grace was transferred from them to us one after the other, [by this divine grace] through my humble self may He render this spiritual child [blank space to add the name] forgiven in everything that he or she as a human sinned toward God, by word or deed, or thought, and with all his or her senses, willingly or unwillingly, knowingly or unknowingly. And if he or she were under the curse or the excommunication of an archbishop or of a priest, or he or she brought upon himself/herself the curse of his/her mother or father, or if he or she fell under his/her own anathema, or he or she disobeyed an oath, or if, being human, he or she bound himself/herself with other sins, and repented with a grievous [lit. "contritious"] heart of all these [sins];and may He [i.e., the Lord] absolve him/her of all guilt and bond. And whatever he or she rendered to oblivion because of human frailty, may [the Lord] forgive him or her for His love of humanity [lit. "philanthropy"], through the prayers of the Most Holy and Most Blessed Our Lady Theotokos [i.e. God Bearer] and Ever-Virgin Mary, of the Holy, Glorious and Most-Laudable Apostles, and of All Saints. Amen.[7]

An analysis of this prayer reveals the following: the text begins by emphasizing the "power of keys," that is, the power of clergy to bind and loose the sins of believers. This is the standard formula in all absolutory texts in use by the church. Midway through, however, the priest's role is highlighted as an intercessory one. It is through him that forgiveness comes from God, the ultimate source of absolution. Indeed, the main thrust of the prayer revolves around the spiritual father's supplication to God to show mercy and offer forgiveness. This, of course, accords well with the traditional Orthodox understanding of the priest's role in conferring absolution (see below). What is, however, noteworthy in this prayer is the emphasis

[7] Translation mine. Terms in square brackets are my additions. See: Maltzew, *Begräbniss-Ritus*, 132–133; appendix B for a contemporary copy of the prayer, procured by Father Alexander Lebedeff; original in printed form purchased in Troitse-Sergieva Lavra in August 2005 (personal possession). Cf. "Rémmisions des péchés," 432–433; and *Service Book*, ed. Hapgood, 392. My thanks to Father Alexander Lebedeff for providing me with an electronic copy of the prayer of absolution in use today, and for his helpful comments.

on certain canonically anomalous conditions in which the deceased may have found himself/herself, such as those of a curse or anathema, for example. Even more important is that the prayer petitions for forgiveness for all sins for which one repented with a heart full of contrition. But interestingly enough, the text says nothing of penance or its completion. Furthermore, provision is made for sins that were rendered to oblivion because of human frailty. Effectively, therefore, the prayer is a last-minute attempt on the part of the spiritual father to bring about absolution by imploring God to forgive all the sins of the deceased, both confessed and unconfessed. Simply put, the priest is asking for a blanket absolution of sins.

Pre-revolutionary scholars (including theologians) and clerics confronted a number of challenges when interpreting the meaning of the *razreshitel'naia molitva*. For instance, both S. V. Bulgakov and K. Nikol'skii endeavored to prove that the prayer was not, in fact, a blanket absolution of sins, both confessed and unconfessed. In particular, Bulgakov made the following points: 1) The prayer was intended as proof that the deceased had died in peace with the church; 2) The prayer conferred absolution for sins which the deceased had confessed and for which he or she had repented, but for which he or she had not completed penance; and 3) The prayer lifted any curses or anathemas that may have been imposed on the dead person.[8] In his manual for the study of the order of liturgical services of the Russian Church, Nikol'skii had argued similarly to Bulgakov, but he had also claimed that such a prayer was beneficial both for the sinful and for the pious, since it never hurts to beseech God for forgiveness.[9]

Earlier in the 19th century, none other than Metropolitan Filaret (1782–1867) had been obliged to deal with the theological meaning of the same prayer on a number of occasions. In 1859, for instance, Filaret received a report on the differences between the Russian and the Greek Orthodox Churches authored by a recent convert from Roman Catholicism to Orthodoxy, identified as Father Constantine. The report touched upon a number of discrepancies in the liturgical and ritual practices of the two sister churches. One

[8] Bulgakov, *Nastol'naia kniga* 2: 1358.

[9] Nikol'skii, *Posobie k izucheniu*, 715–745 (discussion of burial rite), esp. 732–734 (on the prayer of absolution).

entry referred to the rejection of Roman Catholic indulgences by the Greeks, but noted that it appeared that the Russians accepted the practice by placing such an indulgence in the hands of the dead before burial.[10] The report must have vexed Filaret enough to warrant a meeting with Father Constantine in which the main topic of discussion was the differing practices of the reception of converts (i.e., with or without rebaptism) among the Greeks and Russians. Noting that time had not permitted consideration of the indulgence question, Filaret instead composed (presumably for the future guidance of church officials) a note on the burial prayer of absolution. In it, he forcefully denied that the prayer was an indulgence, and instead asserted that it witnessed that the deceased was at peace with the church. He also claimed that the prayer could not be an indulgence since it was given by any priest, unlike indulgences, which were granted by the pope alone (and in the latter case, the recipients, therefore, could go on sinning anyway [!], according to Filaret).[11] In that same year, after receiving another report (this one authored by an archimandrite identified only by the initial "A" in the collection of Filaret's opinions), the metropolitan composed lengthy written reactions to all the points in this second document. Discussing the use of a *venchik* (a kind of "crown" or coronet, placed on the forehead of the dead), and the placement of a prayer of absolution in his (or her, as the case may have been —NC) hands, Filaret claimed that the prayer signified that the deceased was an Orthodox Christian and that he or she died in communion with the church (*v obshchenii s tserkov'iu*). Obviously annoyed by persistent challenges to the validity of the prayer, Filaret exclaimed at the end of this particular entry: "Why is this habit being subjected to such reproaches?"[12]

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[10] *Sobranie mnenii i otzyvov Filareta*, supplemental volume (published 1887): 511–512.

[11] *Sobranie mnenii i otzyvov Filareta*, supplemental volume (published 1887): 511–512. Interestingly, some confession questionnaires from the early modern period included drunkenness when reading the prayer as a potential sin: Korogodina, *Ispoved'*, 497.

[12] *Sobranie mnenii i otzyvov Filareta,* 4: 397–409, esp. 406 for discussion of burial customs and quotation. Interestingly, Filaret admits that the order of rites of the Orthodox Church (*ustav*) does not prescribe the use of the *venchik*: ibid., 406.

Filaret's exasperation notwithstanding, the question of the *razreshitel'naia molitva*'s ritual and doctrinal meaning did not disappear. As late as 1894, A. Almazov dealt with the problem in his massive study on confession in Eastern Orthodoxy. Striking a more dispassionate note, Almazov sought to compare the then current burial prayer with that of absolution pronounced at the end of the confession ritual. He correctly asserted that, whereas the prayer at the end of confession conferred absolution for sins confessed, the *razreshitel'naia molitva* was an entreaty to God to grant forgiveness. At least this was the way in which the burial prayer was understood by his contemporary commentators, Almazov admitted. At the same time, however, he went further and argued that such a theological understanding of the burial prayer must have been current in earlier centuries. As evidence for this assertion, Almazov pointed out that in both the confessional and the burial absolutory prayers of earlier periods (presumably, before the 17th century), clergy employed the deprecatory (as opposed to the indicative) form in absolving the penitent/deceased.[13] Therefore, the two prayers could be perceived as granting and guaranteeing absolution as opposed to merely pleading for it. Moreover, some service books specifically assigned the task of reading the burial prayer to the spiritual father of the deceased, adding, according to Almazov, to its absolutory character. Finally, Almazov also indicated that if anathemas could, both in the past and in the present, be lifted posthumously, one could understand the burial prayer as guaranteeing the elimination of such canonical prohibitions, as well.[14]

It thus appears that several scholars and clergymen of the prerevolutionary period understood the prayer in the following two ways: 1) as offering absolution for sins confessed but for which penance was not completed; and 2) as eliminating any curse or excommunication, and therefore, securing reconciliation with the community of believers. Contrary to the above, however, one should note that nowhere in the prayer is there any explicit conferral of absolution. Throughout, there are entreaties to God to grant forgiveness. Thus, it is curious to assert that the prayer does offer absolution in the case of a curse or anathema, but not in the case

[13] On the adoption of the Latin-influenced indicative form "I absolve you" by some 17th-century Orthodox *trebniki*, see Kraienhorst, *Buß- und Beichtordnungen des griechischen Euchologions*, 302–382, esp. 342–347.
[14] Almazov, *Tainaia ispoved'*, 2: 314–317.

of sins left unconfessed due to a lapse of memory or other human frailty. Simply put, as is evident from the persistent attempts of 19th- and early 20th-century theologians to explain away these apparent contradictions, the burial absolutory prayer has remained theologically on shaky ground.

To begin to understand the meaning of the *razreshitel'naia molitva*, it may be worth examining its textual origins. If the text of the prayer became standardized, presumably sometime between the later 17th and the early 19th centuries, then what was the prototype of this change? To answer this question, we must turn to another form of evidence, the so-called *synchōrochartia* (letters of absolution) for the living that were issued by the Eastern Orthodox patriarchs in the early modern period.

Letters of Absolution for the Living

There is substantial evidence that letters of remission of sins issued by Orthodox hierarchs were quite popular in the Eastern Orthodox world starting in the 16th century.[15] Indeed, it appears that a practice that began among Greeks in the late 15th and early 16th centuries gradually caught on in Serbia, Ukraine, Belarus and, especially after the Time of Troubles, in Russia.[16] The terms used for such documents varied, but the most common ones appear to have been *synchōrochartia* or *synchōrētēria* (documents [lit. "papers"] of forgiveness; sing. *synchōrocharti*) in Greek, and *razreshitel'nye gramoty* or *razreshchal'nye gramoty* (letters of absolution) in Russian. They were granted both to living persons and on behalf of the dead. In the latter case, family members requested and received pardon for their kin who had died under a priestly curse or excommunication.

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[15] On *synchōrochartia* in the Orthodox East, see: Brokgauz-Efron, *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'*, vol. 13, s.v. "Indul'gentsiia"; *Enkyklopaidikon Lexikon Eleutheroudakē*, vol. 11, s.v. "synchōrētērios –ia –on"; Iliou, "Synchōrochartia I," 35–84; Iliou, "Synchōrochartia II," 3–44; Danova, "Indulgentsite," 43–50; Likhachev, "O razreshitel'nykh gramotakh," 77–99; V. B., "O razreshitel'nykh gramotakh," 162–163; Loda, "Le indulgenze," 73–99; Vasil, "Le indulgenze," *Folia Canonica*, 53–71; Vasil, "Le indulgenze," *La Civiltà Cattolica*, 451–462; Senyk, "Rites and Charters of Remission," 426–440; and Nikas, *I primi tentativi di latinizzazione dei Greci di Napoli*.

[16] Iliou, "Synchōrochartia I." There is evidence that such letters were known in Russia as far back as the late 15th century. See Kobeko, "Razreshitel'nye gramoty," 270–279.

The content of such handwritten letters shows several variations until their appearance in print. Once produced in printed form, however, the text became standardized.[17] The following is an example of a standardized printed letter issued by Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem (in office 1669–1707) in the 17th century:

> Our modesty, by the Grace and the gift and the authority of the All Holy and Life-beginning Spirit, given by our Savior Jesus Christ to His Divine and Sacred Holy Disciples and Apostles, that they should bind and loose the sins of humans, having told them: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain them, they are retained." [John 20: 22–23]. And again, "whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." [Matthew 18:18]. And because this divine Grace was transferred from them to us one after the other, we regard as forgiven [*echomen synkechōrēmenon*] our spiritual child [name of recipient], in anything that he or she as a human has sinned, and has transgressed in the face of God, by word or deed or thought, voluntarily or involuntarily, and with all his/her senses, and if he or she be under the curse or the excommunication of an archbishop or of a priest, or of his/her mother or father, or if he or she has fallen under his/her own anathema, or he or she has disobeyed an oath, or if at various times, being human, he or she has been pierced through with other sins, and has confessed these [sins] to his/her spiritual fathers, and has accepted with [all his/her] heart the penance [imposed by them] and has eagerly sought to fulfill it. Therefore, we absolve him/her of the guilt and the bond of all such [sins], and we regard him/her free and forgiven [*eleutheron echomen kai synkechōrēmenon*], by the omnipotent authority and grace of the Divine and venerated Spirit. And whatever he or she has left unconfessed, because of forgetfulness, all these may the merciful God forgive him/her, for His philanthropy [love of humanity, lit. "*philanthropian*"]. By the intercessions of Our All-blessed Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, and of the Holy, Glorious and Most-Laudable Apostle James the *Adelphotheos*

[17] According to Iliou ("Synchōrochartia I," 41–42), after the first appearance of printed versions of these documents in the 17th century, it soon became customary for the patriarchs of Jerusalem to issue them for the living, and (by the beginning of the 19th century) for the patriarchs of Constantinople to issue them for the dead. Still, as Iliou also notes (ibid., 49–50), the other two patriarchates, of Antioch and Alexandria, also issued their own manuscript and printed letters for the living, as the example of Patriarch Makarios of Antioch (see below) testifies: Iliou, "Synchōrochartia II," 3–4.

> [Brother of God], and first hierarch of Jerusalem, and of all Saints. Amen.[18]

A brief analysis of the letter produces the following conclusions. Despite the initial customary deprecatory term "our modesty," the issuer immediately asserts the power of keys as founded on apostolic succession and on the relevant biblical passages. Second, the letter makes a distinction between confessed and unconfessed sins: the former are remitted, but final absolution for the latter is reserved for God. This distinction echoes the Eastern Orthodox understanding of absolution as a gift from God in the presence of the spiritual father's witness.[19] Third, it is noteworthy that the letter makes special mention of several canonical prohibitions (anathema or excommunication, a curse [whether parental, priestly, or self-inflicted], oath taking and its breach). In all these cases, the individual believer ran the risk of finding himself or herself isolated from family and community and ultimately ostracized in the eyes of God and humans. All in all, one may conclude that *synchōrochartia* provided a form of security to the individual believer when facing the vicissitudes of life, the prospect of abrupt death, and the unpredictability of salvation in the afterlife.[20]

If that was the intended use of these letters, then the question arises regarding how they fit into the general absolutory tradition of the Eastern Orthodox Church. As scholars have repeatedly noted, the Orthodox Church's penitential practice, as compared to that of the Roman Catholic Church, paid less attention to the formal fulfill-

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[18] My translation of one of Patriarch Dositheos' letters of absolution, from the Greek text as found in Iliou, "Synchōrochartia I," 64 (and 65 for an image of the actual indulgence). Terms in square brackets are my additions. It should be noted that I use "he or she" because the Greek text uses the neuter term *teknon* (child) as in 'spiritual child' (*kata pneuma teknon*); the equivalent in Slavic is *po dukhu chado*. For Greek sample versions of almost identical letters of absolution to the one translated here, found handwritten or printed in Greek *euchologia* or *nomokanones* of the 17th century, see also Almazov, *Tainaia ispoved'*, 3, appendix to vol. 2, part 3:76–77. See also, appendix C for printed *synchōrocharti* issued by Patriarch Hierotheos of Jerusalem in 1875.

[19] See, for example, Hall, "A View from the Foothills," 120–132.

[20] The above is a précis of a more substantial discussion of Eastern Orthodox patriarchal letters of absolution that is the focus of a separate study of mine, currently under preparation and provisionally entitled "Weapons of the Sinful and of Orthodox Hierarchs: The Use of Indulgences in Eastern Orthodoxy."

ment of penance, and placed more emphasis on the willingness of the penitent to undertake penance.[21] The Orthodox letters of remission certainly reflect this tradition. As a result, they also share many lexical and conceptual elements found in other Orthodox liturgical and devotional texts, such as the rites of confession and burial, in which the clergy act as mediators in the granting of pardon.[22]

Nevertheless, despite their widespread use in the Eastern Orthodox world, *synchōrochartia* never received extensive theological justification. It is noteworthy that the Council of Constantinople in 1727 officially adopted *synchōrochartia* as appropriate and justified equivalents of papal indulgences, but never expounded on their theological and devotional utility with reference to their prior use.[23] (Hereafter, *synchōrochartia* will be referred to as 'Ortho-

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[21] See, among others, Angelopoulos, *Hē Metanoia*; Androutsos, *Dogmatikē*, 376–389; Rhallēs, *Peri tōn mystēriōn*; Amato, *Il sacramento della penitenza*; Chryssavgis, *Repentance and Confession*; Almazov, *Tainaia ispoved'*; Hall, "A View from the Foothills;" Pomazansky, *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, esp. 286–294; Smirnov, *Drevne-russkii dukhovnik*; Kraienhorst, *Buß- und Beichtordnungen*; and "Ob epitimiiakh i tak nazyvaemykh indul'gentsiiakh," 406–441. On canon law, see Levin, *Sex and Society*, esp. the introduction; Kaiser, *Growth of the Law*, esp. ch. 2; and Pavlov, *Nomokanon pri Bol'shom Trebnike*.

[22] Iliou, "Synchōrochartia I," 39. For prayers of absolution in the Russian rite of confession, see *Service Book*, ed. Hapgood, 228; cf. *Trebnik* (Jordanville, 1961), pt. 1: 39v–40; King, *Rites and Ceremonies*, 226 (prayer in rite of confession). For prayers in Greek, see *Mikron Euchologion*, 150–151 (prayer in rite of confession). For a substantial number of Greek and Slavic prayers connected with the rite of confession, see Almazov, *Tainaia ispoved'* 3, appendix to volume 2, part 2.

[23] The decision of the council reads as follows: "We confess that the authority to absolve sins, which, when given in writing to the pious, the Eastern Church of Christ calls *synchōrochartia*, and the Latins call indulgences (*indoulnketzas*), is given by Christ in the Holy Church, and that their use is one of the most salutary refuges. [We confess] that these *synchōrochartia* are given in the whole Catholic Church by all four most holy Patriarchs, of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. [We confess] that they are given frugally and with spiritual reproach, and to whom and whenever is appropriate, in the exact manner that the Eastern Church follows in such matters, and not in the manner of the Latins, through which develops immeasurable license and misuse, from which [license and misuse] everybody remembers what evils followed in the Western Church. And to say that only the Pope has the exclusive authority to grant such [letters of absolution] is an obvious lie and a result

dox indulgences.') That task was pretty much the work of two 17th-century theologians, Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem and the monk Nikolaos Koursoulas (ca. 1602–1652).[24] In his history of the Jerusalem patriarchate, Dositheos devoted a whole chapter to a discussion of papal indulgences. In it, he criticized both papal pretenses to exclusive rights in issuing them as well as the main Latin theological positions underlying the practice. In particular, Dositheos attacked the doctrines of the treasury of the church and of vicarious satisfaction, and attempted to show that Latin theologians themselves disagreed on important points.

In the concluding section of his chapter on papal indulgences, Dositheos summarized in five points what he believed to be the Eastern theology of indulgences:

1) All patriarchs, bishops, and spiritual fathers, not just the pope, share in the power of the keys, and therefore can offer absolution of sin.
2) Christ's sacrifice was the ultimate source of salvation, not any purported treasury of the church.
3) Since the patriarchs are in "some extraordinary sense" the successors to the Apostles, they have the authority to issue *synchōrochartia* not only to those who confessed to patriarchs in person, but to any believer.
4) A patriarch's absolution letter is not a second absolution of sins (supplementary to one received from a confessor), but rather a more official certificate of repentance, granted as an example for the edification of others by the memory of sins (in other words, the certificate serves as a reminder of sinful behavior for which absolution has been granted). Such a letter eliminates any penance owed, especially "if in any occasion it has not been fulfilled," but presupposes true contrition.
5) The Eastern Church accepts "satisfaction" in penance, but not in a sense that lends itself to a doctrine of purgatory.[25]

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of the absurd innovation of the Latins." As cited in: Karmirēs, *Ta dogmatika kai symvolika mnēmeia*, 2:867–868 (translation mine).

[24] Here, I provide only a brief summary of their views, specifically focusing on the function of indulgences. For more information, see Chrissidis, "Weapons of the Sinful and of Orthodox Hierarchs." On Patriarch Dositheos, see Dura, *Ho Dositheos Hierosolymōn*; and Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie*, passim. On Koursoulas, see Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie*, 242–244.

[25] See Dositheos, *Historia*, book. 9, ch. 12, pp. 80–111, esp. 102–103 (on satisfaction: Dositheos emphasizes its medicinal/therapeutic, rather than

Dositheos was clearly conversant with the Western theology of indulgences, but disagreed with certain elements. For him, the crux of the matter centered on two points: negation of papal exclusive prerogative in granting indulgences, and rejecting temporal punishment in the form of penance when the penitent showed true contrition. According to Dositheos, then, Orthodox indulgences were public certificates of contrition that absolved the penitent from sins and eliminated the need to fulfill penance.[26]

Koursoulas's view was quite similar. A graduate of the Greek College of Rome, Koursoulas was heavily influenced by Latin theology. After providing a detailed theological explanation of the concept of satisfaction, Koursoulas mentioned that those requesting such Orthodox indulgences wished to appeal (*enstatikōs*) to a higher authority in the church, and firmly concluded that patriarchal indulgences eliminated any canonical penance. But he also added that the penitent would be better off if he tried to fulfill penance anyway, as a caveat against falling into the same sins.[27]

Synchōrochartia in the Eastern Church equipped the living with official proof of absolution and helped them to eliminate penance. They may even have been utilized as a safeguard against the possibility that sudden death might prevent the fulfillment of penance. But what if one had not been able to procure such a formal declaration of absolution and had died without prior confession, or, even worse, in a state of canonical prohibition? It is to these matters that we now turn.

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punitive, value) and 109–111 (concluding remarks summarizing Orthodox teaching on *synchōrochartia*). For sample Orthodox critiques of the doctrine of satisfaction, see, e. g., "Ob epitimiiakh i tak nazyvaemykh indul'gentsiiakh"; and Androutsos, *Dogmatikē*, 387–389.

[26] In this context, Dositheos' views on the purgatory are pertinent: Early on in life, Dositheos seems to have accepted some sense of purgatorial expiatory punishments after death. Later on, especially from the 1690s onward, he switched his position and rejected their existence. He also denied that there was any distinction between guilt and temporal punishment. He thus concluded that if the first is forgiven, then the latter is remitted as well, leaving no need for satisfaction in the Western sense. See Ware, *Eustratius Argenti*, 150–151; Karmirēs, *Hē homologia tēs orthodoxou pisteōs*.

[27] Koursoulas, *Synopsis tēs Hieras Theologias*, 2: 425–426. Koursoulas' theology remained unpublished in the early modern period, but was quite popular in manuscript form in the 17th through the 19th centuries. See Iliou, "Synchōrochartia I," 40n9.

Indulgences for the Dead: The Case of the Greek Orthodox East

There is very little evidence that the Greeks employed a practice of placing a written prayer in the hands of the dead comparable to the custom practiced in Russia.[28] The Greeks did, however, ask for remission of sins posthumously for their dead relatives. They addressed all such requests to the patriarch of Constantinople, who then issued an extensive synodal letter of absolution. As in the case of letters of absolution for living persons, the indulgence for the dead became standardized with the appearance of large print runs (in this case, in the beginning of the 19th century). The following is a sample of such a letter.

> Our Modesty, praying together with the Most Holy and Most Blessed Patriarchs, dear in the Holy Spirit and most beloved brothers and co-celebrants, and together with the most sacred fellow brothers Arch-hierarchs and Honored ones, by the divine grace and authority of the Most Holy, Life-Giving and Mystery-Presiding (*teletarchikou*) Spirit; [which authority was] given by our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ to his divine and holy Disciples and Apostles, that they should bind and loose the sins of humans, having told them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain them, they are retained." [John 20: 22–23]. And again, "whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." [Matthew 18: 18]. And because this divine and never-emptying Grace was transferred from them to us one after the other, we regard as forgiven [blank space for name(s) to be added] and absolved of all psychic and bodily sin, both at the present time and in the time to come, in any-

[28] For example, the *nomokanōn* of Manouēl Malaxos includes a sample prayer that the father confessor would write out and place in the hand of the deceased "for the fear of *telōnia* [i.e., toll houses, where the demons stood interrogating the soul] of the air": see *Nomokanōn Manouēl Notariou*, 462. But the practice does not appear to have caught on among the Greeks. In fact, the text rarely appears in *euchologia* of the early modern period. See Almazov, *Tainaia Ispoved'*, 2:253–254. On the other hand, there is some evidence that patriarchal indulgences for the living may have functioned in a similar manner. See the comments in Iliou, "Synchōrochartia I," 42, esp. 42n14. On at least one occasion from the second half of the 20th century, a *synchōrocharti* was placed on the mouth of a deceased woman before burial: she had acquired it while on pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the 1950s (personal communication with Prof. Antonis Liakos, University of Athens, Greece, August 2006).

thing that they, as humans, sinned and transgressed in the face of God, by word or deed or thought, voluntarily or involuntarily, knowingly or unknowingly, openly or stealthily (*aphanōs*), and in all their senses. And if they were under the curse of their Mother or Father; or if they fell under their own anathema; or if they took an oath and broke it; or if they swore a false oath; or if at some time they received an Ecclesiastical curse and excommunication by a Priest, or Arch-hierarch or Patriarch for whatever reason and, due to sluggishness, they did not receive forgiveness; or if they embittered one of the clergy by word or deed, and they received from him an insoluble bond; or if their tongue jumped ahead of their mind, and they said and verbalized what they ought not have; or if they did not steer a course in accordance with God's will and their Christian profession; but if they went astray and they acted publicly (*epoliteusanto*) in a manner that was not just; or if they neglected and broke faith with his Divine commandments and legal commands; or if they were overtaken by pride, and they decided beyond what they ought to have, and they imagined great things about themselves, having taken on as second nature the stealthy suggestions of the avenging spirit (*physiothentes hypovolais tou alastoros*); or if they were the subject of written Ecclesiastical documents of penance, issued at different times and for diverse sensible reasons, and hence they were subjected to a bond of penance; or if they lied by mouth and lips at some point because of base love of profit, or for another reason; or if, bearing malice, they developed insistent wrath against someone and managed to bring about harm and damage on that person; or if, because of their greediness and their hardened souls, they did not give alms to the poor; or if, slackened by indifference (*akēdeia*), they neglected their prayer and the established rituals of the Church; or if they did not observe the fasting days although they [suffered no] bodily need; or if they did not keep the holidays [by not working]; or if they blackened the beauty of their souls and they soiled the divinely woven uniform of divine Baptism through absurd memories, thoughts and gestures that did not befit their Christian profession; or if they engaged in witchcraft, trickery, and satanic songs; or if they disobeyed their spiritual fathers, and they looked down upon and transgressed those things that they promised to keep; or if they were pierced through by other emotional sins and transgressions at various times, and in various places and modes during their lifetime in any way whatsoever; and they fell down as is customary among humans; and if, having repented about all these things, they confessed everything to their spiritual fathers and they whole-heartedly accepted the penance imposed by them, and they eagerly sought to fulfill it, but they did not manage to perform [penance completely], because they were snatched away by fate [i.e., death] and hence they did not receive forgiveness. Therefore, we absolve them of the guilt and

the bond of all these, their known and unknown sins and transgressions, and we consider them free and we restore them forgiven by the gift, omnipotent authority and grace of the Most Holy and revered Spirit. And if, because of forgetfulness or some other human frailty, they left unconfessed some things, all these may the merciful and human-loving God forgive them, for His philanthropy and extreme goodness. Yes, Master, all-merciful Lord Jesus Christ, our God, may your immeasurable mercy and your incomparable philanthropy be victorious, and may You not overlook your own creation so that it is swallowed by destruction. But hearken unto us, your sinful supplicants, pleading on behalf of these, your servants who have fallen asleep [blank for names] and absolve them of all psychic and bodily bond which hang over them in any way. And forgive them compassionately all the things that they did badly and senselessly, overlooking everything sympathetically and philanthropically according to your ineffable mercy and the multitude of your goodness. Place the abyss of your mercies against the multitude of their sins. And wipe off all their acts of lawlessness. For you have a plenitude of streams of mercy, and a sea of sympathy, and an abyss of compassion. And relieve them of the eternal punishment, and make them worthy of your kingdom, and of standing to your right. And dissolve their bodies to what they were made of, and consent that they become earth. For you said, Lord, "You are earth and you will go into earth." And place their souls in the land of living and in the houses of the just, and count them together with your select ones, where the light of Your face stands guard and pleases all your saints from all time. Bent by compassion and by our warm pleadings and requests, which we were appointed to offer without hesitation both for our sins and for the ignorance of lay people, who were ransomed from the curse of law through your honorable and undefiled blood. Oh human-loving and all-merciful Lord, through the intercessions and supplications of your Undefiled mother, Our Mistress Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary; of the honorable and glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John; of the Holy, Glorious and All-Laudable Divine Messengers and spirit-carrying Apostles, and of all saints who have pleased you since the beginning of time. Amen.

[Date. Signatures follow.][29]

The above text shares certain similarities with Orthodox indulgences for the living. First, it makes a forceful assertion of the power of keys and absolves the dead of any sins that they had confessed and for which they had undertaken penance. Similarly,

[29] Iliou, "Synchōrochartia I," 65–69.

it presupposes sincerity and true contrition at confession, as well as the willingness to undertake penance on the part of the believer while alive. However, as is obvious, it also differs markedly from the letters of absolution for the living. First and foremost, it is more extensive, going beyond the simple assertion of absolution for all sins that were committed by word or deed or thought, to include an enumeration of a multitude of canonical lapses. Second, despite the assertion of the power of keys, and the offering of patriarchal absolution, the letter is markedly more pleading in tone. In fact, the last third of the text is characterized by direct petitions to God to grant His mercy on behalf of the dead. Nevertheless, the text avoids any references to a vengeful God and instead emphasizes God's generosity and mercy. Noticeably, the word "mercy" and its derivatives appear multiple times throughout the text. In that sense, as in the case of indulgences for the living, patriarchal letters of absolution for the dead also reflect the Orthodox emphasis on the benevolent and magnanimous characteristics of God. At the same time, by the very fact that only the patriarch of Constantinople could issue indulgences for the dead, these letters reconfirm the patriarch's authority as the supreme mediator, who pleads before God on behalf of his dead flock.[30]

Little, if any, theological discussion of these letters has been undertaken in modern Greek theology.[31] Neither Dositheos nor Koursoulas touched upon them specifically and, therefore, their views on the matter, if any, remain unknown. However, given that the texts contained posthumous absolution of confessed sins for which penance had been assigned, it would appear that they can be legitimately called Eastern Orthodox indulgences for the dead.[32] But since these texts became codified much later, in the beginning of the 19th century, it seems reasonable to assume that they did not influence the form of the *razreshitel'naia molitva* in

[30] It should be added here that a good part of the text comes from a prayer for resolving any curse or excommunication, which appears in Greek *euchologia*. This similarity probably points to the original function of these letters: they were initially issued in behalf of those who died while excommunicated. Therefore, it was their relatives' obligation to secure their posthumous pardon.

[31] It should be emphasized that indulgences for the dead attempted to cover a plethora of potential canonical lapses, and not just excommunication. For a discussion of excommunication in particular, see Michaēlares, *Aphorismos*.

[32] Iliou also makes this argument: "Synchōrochartia I."

Russia. In any case, the actual text of the latter is clearly closer to the text of the patriarchal indulgences for the living, in both length and, more importantly, in content. It is to this issue that we now turn.

Comparison between *Razreshitel'naia Molitva* and *Synchōrocharti* for the Living

A comparison between the *razreshitel'naia molitva* used in Russia on behalf of the dead and an Eastern Orthodox *synchōrocharti* for the living produces the following observations (see appendix A, for the two texts with their textual similarities underlined): Both prayers are primarily an ultimate attempt by a spiritual father to implore God to offer forgiveness. The Orthodox indulgence for the living guarantees absolution in the here and now for all sins confessed, even though the penance may have not been completed. The Russian prayer's tone is a pleading one; the indulgence's alternates between positive certainty of absolution for some sins and hope that others will also be forgiven.

At the same time, however, the similarities between the Russian prayer of absolution for the dead and the patriarchal indulgence for the living are striking:

1. Both texts begin with a forceful assertion of the "power of keys."
2. Both texts emphasize canonically anomalous situations that heavily influence the individual's standing within the Christian community (understood as one encompassing both the living and the dead) and before God.
3. Both texts underscore the importance of true contrition in confession.
4. Both texts implore God to confer absolution even for sins that were left unconfessed because of forgetfulness connected to human frailty.

Already in 1900, the Archpriest Kl. Fomenko discussed what he called the "absolutory liturgies" performed on the request of pilgrims in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. According to him, Greek bishops presided over the proceedings, which included the reading of an "absolutory prayer" above the head of the believer. A pilgrim furnished Fomenko with such a printed prayer issued by Patriarch of Jerusalem Nikodēmos in 1890. The printed prayer reminded Fomenko of *antimēnsia* (altar cloths), with

the text occupying the place where Christ's burial would normally be in an *antimēnsion*. The text's Russian translation was not without its problems, Fomenko remarked, and cited it verbatim. More importantly, he noted that the text was that of the absolutory prayer placed in the hands of the dead during burial in Russia. Thus, the origin of the prayer was not Russian, but rather, a translation of a Greek prayer. Finally, Fomenko expressed his concern over the potentially incorrect interpretation of the absolutory liturgies.[33] Father Vasilii Prilutskii also remarked on the similarities of the two prayers. In his in-depth study of certain rites of the Russian Orthodox Church of the 16th and early 17th centuries, Prilutskii, following Fomenko, suggested an "eastern origin" (his term) of the burial prayer of absolution.[34]

The above comparison provides support for Fomenko's remarks. It is, therefore, certain that the text of the *razreshitel'naia molitva* that Russians have placed in the hands of the dead since at least the late 19th century (if not before) is in fact an almost verbatim rendering of the text of an Eastern Orthodox *synchōrocharti* for the living. The 19th-century form of the burial prayer of absolution is certainly much closer textually to a *synchōrocharti* for the living than it is, for example, to the equivalent prayers of absolution in Russian service books of the period before the middle of the 17th century.[35]

A question arises regarding the reason for the adoption of this particular Greek text by the Russian Orthodox Church. Assuming that this adoption transpired sometime between the second half of the 17th century (as some scholars have argued) and the

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[33] Fomenko, "Zametka," is based on his experiences as a pilgrim to the Holy Land.

[34] Prilutskii, *Chastnoe bogosluzhenie*, 254, fn. 3.

[35] With regard to burial prayers of absolution up to the mid-17th century, Prilutskii distinguishes two categories: those to be read above the coffin (*nad grobom*) and those to be read above the body of the deceased and then placed in his/her hand before interment. In practice, however, there appears to have been far more variation, as prayers of the first category were prescribed to be placed in the hands of the dead on many occasions. Further, Prilutskii distinguishes two main variants of the second category, and speaks of another three secondary variants. See *Chastnoe bogosluzhenie*, 248–263. As indicated above (note 34), Prilutskii had rejected a Russian origin for the burial prayer of absolution of the second category.

beginning of the 19th, I would propose that this borrowing was conditioned by *at least* two developments: 1) the widespread popularity of patriarchal indulgences in Orthodox Slavdom in the early modern period; and 2) the Russian tsarist court's gradual adoption of the custom of accepting indulgences from itinerant Greek Orthodox patriarchs. Let us consider each of these factors in turn.[36]

Patriarchal indulgences became popular in Slavic communities of the Balkans starting in the 16th century, and certainly in Ukraine and Belarus by the early 17th, if not before. As for Russia, one scholar has suggested that such letters do not appear to have circulated widely, and contemporary witnesses confirm this view.[37] For example, in the mid-17th century, Juraj Križanić (the Croatian traveler and thinker) lamented that the ex-patriarch of Constantinople, Athanasios Patellaros, was peddling indulgences to important people (*nobilibus*) in Ruthenia (*per Russiam*) having printed them in Kiev in Ruthenian Slavic (*lingua Russiaca*) without any mention of confession or of penance. He further remarked that the poor souls who received the documents treated them as great treasures and ordered that the indulgences accompany them to their graves. He also reported the case of one metropolitan who continually advertised absolutory letters to people of means. Having succeeded in convincing a well-to-do individual to purchase one, Križanić continued, the metropolitan went to the penitent's home, blessed it with holy water, and read above him the absolution letter without any prior confession.[38]

A perusal of Paul of Aleppo's well-known travelogue confirms Križanić's observations and complements them further. On their way to Moscow and back, in the mid-17th century, Paul and his father, Patriarch Makarios of Antioch (in office 1647–1672), were, to

[36] A third and potentially important factor may have been the Nikonian reform of liturgical books. I intend to examine this issue in a separate study.

[37] Senyk, "Rites and Charters of Remission," 436–437.

[38] What he means by *Russia* in this particular case is not entirely clear. However, at this point in his account he enumerates a number of Orthodox clerical practices that he considers harmful. In the immediately previous entry (on the ordination of people who were virtual strangers to the itinerant Greek patriarchs and metropolitans) he refers to *Russia* again, but then specifies *Minorem* and *Albam* (i.e., Ukraine and Belarus). He does not make a similar qualification on *Russia* in his discussion of indulgences. Križanić, *Russkoe gosudarstvo*, 2:191–193.

their pleasant surprise, continually pestered in Ukraine and Belarus for indulgences by nobles, Cossacks, monks, nuns, and townspeople of all ages and of both genders. In other words, the demand for them in the Ruthenian "market" came from all social strata.[39]

In Muscovite Russia, however, the situation appears to have been different. If Paul of Aleppo is again to serve as our source, then granting such charters was confined to the circles of the royal court. Right before Makarios' departure, the tsar had an audience with him and asked him to provide letters of absolution for himself and members of his family, as well as for members of boyar families. Makarios duly obliged, and Paul distributed them accordingly. In his account, Paul specified that these were letters Makarios had printed in Kiev.[40] There is evidence that this was not an isolated incident. The occasion of another departure, that of Patriarch Paisios of Alexandria (in office 1657–1678) in 1669, served similarly as an opportunity for Tsar Aleksei and his family to receive written remissions of sins.[41] Moreover, lay people were not the only believers interested in them. The same Patriarch Makarios granted indulgences to the nuns at the New Maiden (Novodevichii) Monastery. As Paul notes, however, this cloister was largely populated by Ukrainian and Belarusian nuns transferred there by the tsar.[42] Given the constraints (limited freedom of movement and only

[39] See Paul of Aleppo, *Puteshestvie*; and Senyk, "Rites and Charters of Remission." Paul of Aleppo referred to three kinds of indulgences: folio for the elite people (*vel'mozh*) in the Russian translation; middle-sized letters for the common people (*naroda*), and small sizes for women: Paul of Aleppo, *Puteshestvie*, 2:59; and Senyk, "Rites and Charters of Remission," 435–436. Senyk conveniently has collected almost all references to indulgences in Paul's account. She appears to have missed only one (see Paul of Aleppo, *Puteshestvie*, 2: 116), which referenced the occasion of a grant of written remission to the *voevoda* of Putivl', Nikita Alekseevich Ziuzin. On Ziuzin, see also ibid., 3:160; and Barsukov, *Spiski gorodovykh voevod*, 190. As Paul observes, and as is well known from the history of the conflict between Patriarch Nikon and Tsar Aleksei, Nikita Ziuzin was a close associate of Nikon.

[40] Paul of Aleppo, *Puteshestvie*, 4: 158.

[41] Likhachev, "O razreshitel'nykh gramotakh vostochnykh patriarkhov," 78. Citing the witness of V. O. Eingorn, who had studied the *grecheskie dela* of the Muscovite Chancellery of Foreign Affairs, Likhachev quotes him as saying that "references to such indulgences (*razreshitel'nykh gramot*) are not rare." Ibid., 78, fn. 3.

[42] Paul of Aleppo, *Puteshestvie*, 4: 152.

within the circles of the royal court) under which Patriarch Makarios had to operate while in Muscovy, it is probably not surprising that he did not have the opportunity to distribute indulgences to individual Muscovites of other social strata, assuming that a demand existed.[43] Unless more information is uncovered, our current state of knowledge would suggest that letters of absolution were catching on in Russia from the top down, through the contact of high-ranking Greek and Arab clerics with the Muscovite elite, and through the influence of Ukrainian and Belarusian monastics.

Indisputable, however, is that in the middle of the 17th century, Moscow's Printing Office (*Pechatnyi Dvor*), which was under the supervision of the church, became a major alternative outlet for Greek (and Serbian) prelates in search of printing presses for their charters of remission. Specifically, in 1653, the former patriarch of Constantinople, Athanasios (the same Athanasios of Križanić's account), petitioned the tsar to allow the printing of 500 indulgence letters in Ruthenian Slavic (to distribute in Ukraine among Cossacks, as the patriarch specified).[44] In 1655, the Serbian patriarch, Gabriel (in office 1648–1655), succeeded in having 1,000 of them printed with the consent of Patriarch Nikon. In 1668, Patriarch Makarios of Antioch printed 2,000. In 1669, Patriarch Paisios of Alexandria printed 1,000 for men and 500 for women.[45] None of these orders appears to have raised any eyebrows in Moscow, at

[43] There is evidence that Jerusalem prelates were sending letters of absolution to Russia even before the 17th century. For instance, Patriarch Ioakim informed Grand Prince Vasilii Vasil'evich (before 1462) that his representative to Moscow was ready to distribute such letters to anyone desiring them; and in 1586, Patriarch Sophronios sent a written remission of sins to Tsaritsa Irina, the wife of Tsar Fedor Ivanovich. See Kobeko, "Razreshitel'nye gramoty Ierusalimskikh Patriarkhov."

[44] Likhachev, "O razreshitel'nykh gramotakh vostochnykh patriarkhov," 78–80.

[45] For letters of absolution from the patriarchs see Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts (RGADA), Fond 1182, Moskovskii Pechatnyi Dvor (Muscovite Printing Office), opis' 1, No. 57, ff. 38–39v (Gabriel); No. 58, f. 177 (Makarios); No. 66, f. 24 (Paisios). See also Likhachev, "O razreshitel'nykh gramotakh vostochnykh patriarkhov," 78–81. It should be noted that Likhachev also refers to a printed indulgence issued in the name of Paisios Ligarides, one of the well-known protagonists in the deposition of Patriarch Nikon. Likhachev does not specify to whom the letter was offered: ibid., 83. For a first attempt at compiling lists of print runs since the 17th century, see Iliou, "Synchōrochartia I" and "Synchōrochartia II."

least openly, among the higher clergy.[46] Had the letters been seen as theologically suspect, the highest ecclesiastical authorities of the Russian Church would surely have prevented the completion of the printing orders. The deciding factor among the Muscovite pious seems to have been the extent to which they valued the spiritual guidance, and respected the status, of Orthodox itinerant prelates from the Balkans. Muscovites seem to have accepted Eastern indulgences as valid certificates of their good standing before God.[47]

A further venue that potentially facilitated the transfer of the text from the Greek Orthodox Churches to the Russian in the early modern period may have been the utilization of patriarchal *synchōrochartia* in the burial services of the Russian royal family. In at least one case, there is evidence that a patriarchal letter was sent specifically to rest with a Russian princess in her grave. Indeed, the description of the burial ceremony of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's sister, Tsarevna Tat'iana Mikhailovna (died in 1706), specifically mentions that both the *razreshitel'naia molitva* of her spiritual father *and* a Greek patriarchal indulgence (specified as "sent by the Greek patriarch," although he remains unnamed) were placed in her hands before her interment.[48] It would, thus, be reasonable to

[46] Of course, opponents of Patriarch Nikon's reforms were quick to show the doctrinal error and the economic motives behind the distribution of such indulgences by Greek clerics. But it is interesting that this was done only anonymously and within the context of general opposition to Greek meddling in Russian affairs. See, RGADA, Fond 27, op. 1, No. 558: "Spisok s anonimnogo pis'ma tsariu Alekseiu Mikhailovichu o pritesneniiakh dukhovenstva ot patriarkhov Iosifa i Nikona...o razreshitel'nykh gramotakh vostochnykh patriarkhov..." (dated 1668), esp. f. 24.

[47] According to Likhachev, the absence of many surviving examples of indulgences from Russia may stem from the practice of placing them in the hands of the dead during burial. See "O razreshitel'nykh gramotakh vostochnykh patriarkhov," 81. It should also be noted here that starting in the 18th century, many pilgrims to the Holy Land from the Russian Empire received such letters. See ibid. 86–87; and Kobeko, "Razreshitel'nye gramoty Ierusalimskikh Patriarkhov," 278, 278n4 (indulgence given to the well-known traveler Vasilii Grigor'evich Barskii). This practice may have been a further contributing factor to the adoption by the Russian Orthodox Church of the indulgence text for the burial absolutory prayer.

[48] See Talina, *Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich*, 115–117. According to Talina, "napisannuiu na liste molitvu arkhierei podpisyvali i vkladyvali v ruku pokoiniku vmeste s 'listom ot grecheskogo patriarkha.'" See the descriptions of Tsarevna Tat'iana's funeral: "O prestavlenii i pogrebenii Tsarevny

propose that a custom initiated by the Muscovite court contributed to the Russian Church's adoption of a modified version of an Eastern indulgence as its text for the *razreshitel'naia molitva* for all Russians.

A last, maybe immodest, note is in order here: in the pre-Revolutionary period, Russian Orthodox scholars realized that the text of the prayer of absolution put in the hands of the dead could be theologically problematic. And they made every effort to explain it away. Conceivably, their uneasiness resulted partially from a certain unwillingness of Orthodox clergy and scholars to countenance a text whose theological analysis could render results mirroring Roman Catholic absolutory beliefs and practices. It is to be hoped that the Orthodox Churches (both Greek and Russian) will move beyond their defensive anti-Catholicism, and will engage in a substantive discussion of the theological implications of both the *razreshitel'nye molitvy* and the *synchōrochartia*.

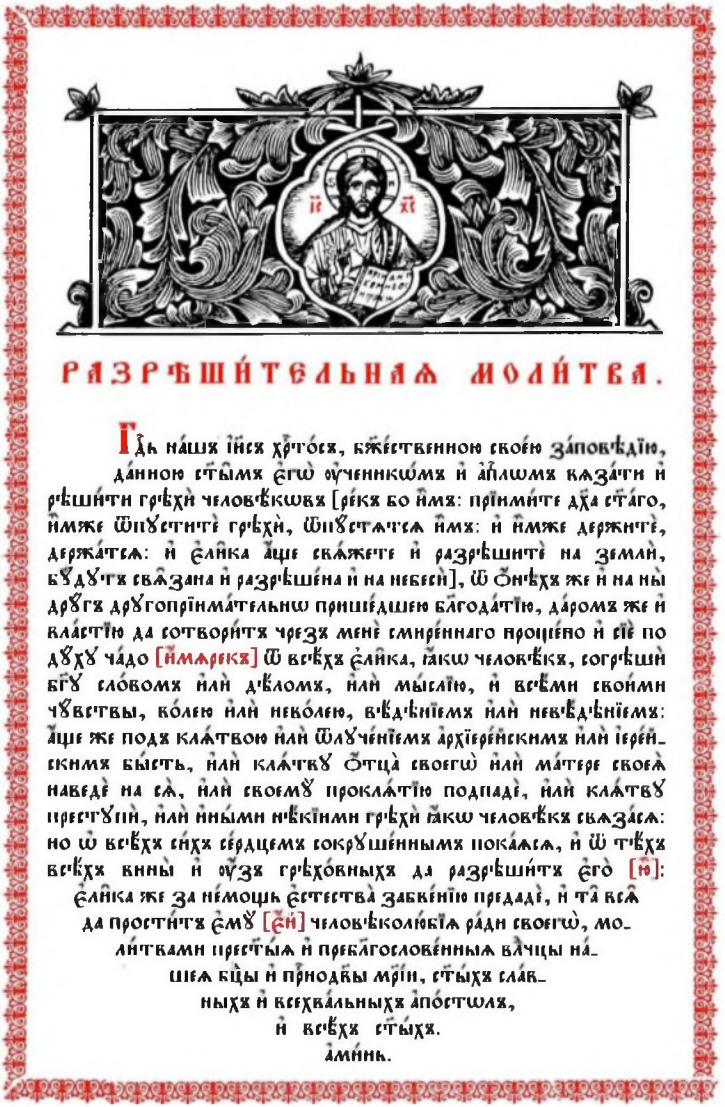
Tat'iany Mikhailovny," 214–216 (with the erroneous date 1658); and also, "Chin pogrebeniia Tsarevny Tat'iany Mikhailovny," 111–122 (with the correct date, 1706).

Appendix A

Prayer of Absolution	**Eastern Orthodox Indulgence**
Our Lord, Jesus Christ,	Our modesty,
by his divine grace, gift and authority,	by the Grace and the gift and the authority of the All Holy and Life-beginning Spirit,
given to his holy disciples and apostles,	given by our Savior Jesus Christ to his Divine and Sacred Holy Disciples and Apostles,
to bind and loose the sins of humans,	that they should bind and loose the sins of humans,
having said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain them, they are retained." [John 20: 22–23]. "Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." [Matthew 18:18].	having told them "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain them, they are retained." [John 20: 22–23]. And again, "whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." [Matthew 18:18].
And because this divine Grace was transferred from them to us one after the other,	And because this divine Grace was transferred from them to us one after the other,
[by this divine grace] through my humble self may he render this spiritual child [blank space to add the name] forgiven	we regard as forgiven [*echomen synkechorēmenon*] our spiritual child [name of recipient],
in everything that he or she as a human sinned towards God, by word or deed, or thought, and with all his or her senses, willingly or unwillingly, knowingly or unknowingly.	in anything that he or she as a human has sinned, and has transgressed in the face of God, by word or deed or thought, voluntarily or involuntarily, and with all his/her senses.

Prayer of Absolution	**Eastern Orthodox Indulgence**
And if he or she were under the curse or the excommunication of an archbishop or of a priest, or he or she brought upon himself /herself the curse of his/her mother or father, or if he or she fell under his/her own anathema, or he or she disobeyed an oath, or if, being human, he or she bound himself/herself with other sins,	and if he or she be under the curse or the excommunication of an archbishop or of a priest, or of his/her mother or father, or if he or she has fallen under his/her own anathema, or he or she has disobeyed an oath, or if at various times, being human, he or she has been pierced through with other sins,
and repented with a grievous [lit. "contritious"] heart of all these [sins];	and has confessed these [sins] to his/her spiritual Fathers, and has accepted with [all his/her] heart the penance [imposed by them] and has eagerly sought to fulfill it.
and may He [i.e., the Lord] absolve him/her of all guilt and bond	Therefore, we absolve him/her of the guilt and the bond of all such [sins], and we regard him/her free and forgiven [*eleutheron echomen kai synkechorēmenon*], by the omnipotent authority and grace of the Divine and venerated Spirit.
And whatever he or she rendered to oblivion because of human frailty, may [the Lord] forgive him or her for his love of humanity [lit. "philanthropy"], through the prayers of the Most Holy and Most Blessed Our Mistress Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, of the Holy Glorious and Most-Laudable Apostles, and of All Saints.	And whatever he or she has left unconfessed, because of forgetfulness, all these may the merciful God forgive him/her, for His philanthropy [love of humanity, lit. '*philanthropian*']. By the intercessions of Our All-blessed Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, and of the Holy, Glorious and Most-Laudable Apostle James the *Adelphotheos*, and first hierarch of Jerusalem, and of all Saints.
Amen	Amen

Appendix B



РАЗРѢШИ́ТЕЛЬНАѦ МОЛИ́ТВА.

Гдь на́шѣ їи̑сѣ хр̑то́сѣ, бж̑е́ственною свое́ю за́повѣ́дїю, да́нною сѧ́тымъ є̑гѡ̀ оученикѡ́мъ и а̑пл҃ѡмъ каза́ти и рѣшѝти грѣхѝ человѣ́кѡвѣ [рѣ́къ бо и̑мъ: пр̑имѝте дх҃а сѧ́таго, и̑мже ѿпу́стите грѣхѝ, ѿпу́стятсѧ и̑мъ: и и̑мже держите́, держа́тсѧ: и є̑ли́ка а̑ще сказ̑а́ете и разрѣшите́ на земли́, бу́дутъ свѧ̑зана и разрѣше́на и на небесѝ], ѿ ѻ̑нѣ́хъ же и на ны̑ дру́гъ дру́гопр̑инма́тельнѡ пришє́дшею бл҃года́тїю, да́ромъ же и кла́етїю да сотвори́тъ чрезъ менѣ̀ смире́ннаго проще́но и сїѐ по дх҃у ча́до [и̑маргкѧ] ѿ всѣ́хъ є̑ли́ка, а̑кѡ человѣ́ки, согрѣшѝ бг҃у сло́вомъ и̑лѝ дѣ́ломъ, и̑лѝ мы̑слїю, и всѣ́ми свои́ми чу́вствы, ко́лею и̑лѝ неко́лею, вѣ́дѣ́нїе́мъ и̑лѝ невѣ́дѣ́нїе́мъ: а̑ще же подъ кла́твою и̑лѝ ѿлу́чѐнїе́мъ а̑рхїере́йскимъ и̑лѝ їере́йскимъ бы́сть, и̑лѝ кла́тву ѻ̑тца̀ своегѡ̀ и̑лѝ ма́тере своеѧ̀ наведѐ на сѧ̀, и̑лѝ своемꙋ̀ прокла́тїю подпадѣ́, и̑лѝ кла́тву прест҃у́пѝ, и̑лѝ и̑ны̑ми нѣ́кїими грѣхѝ а̑кѡ человѣ́къ сказ̑а́ѧ: но ѿ всѣ́хъ сі́ихъ се́рдцемъ сокру́шѐнны̑мъ пока́ѧсѧ, и ѿ тѣ́хъ всѣ́хъ вины̑ и о̑у́зъ грѣхо́вны̑хъ да разрѣши́тъ є̑гѡ̀ [и̑]: є̑ли́ка же за не́мощь е̑стества̀ забре́нїю предадѝ, и̑ тѣ̀ всѣ̀ да прости́тъ є̑мꙋ̀ [е̑и̑] человѣ́коли́кїѧ ра́ди своегѡ̀, мо-
ли́тваѧ прест҃ы́ѧ и прѣблг҃ословѐнныѧ вл҃чцы на-
шеѧ бц҃ы и пр̑инодны̑ мр̑ї́и, сѧ́ты̑хъ слав-
ны̑хъ и всехвальны̑хъ а̑пѡ́столъ,
и всѣ́хъ сѧ́ты̑хъ.
а̑ми́нь.

Copy of the contemporary prayer of absolution placed in the hands of the dead

Appendix C

Synchōrocharti (Orthodox indulgence) for the living, 1875, issued by Patriarch Hierotheos of Jerusalem

Author's personal collection

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OLD BELIEVER COMMUNITIES: IDEALS AND STRUCTURES*

Robert O. Crummey

The following analysis and arguments rest on the fundamental assumption that the Old Believers, both priestly and priestless, are best understood as Eastern Orthodox Christians. As they built their communities they saw themselves primarily as the guardians of a more authentic variant of Russian Orthodoxy than that of the official church. Comparison with other forms of Christian belief and practice, particularly Protestantism, can be enlightening, but, if taken too far, distorts our understanding of Old Belief.

If our assumption is valid, the experience of the diverse branches of Old Belief in organizing their common life and worship offers us a window into the range of possibilities within the Russian Orthodox tradition. For, given the extremely difficult circumstances in which the Old Believers lived for most of their history, they developed a wide variety of structures to provide themselves with spiritual comfort and mutual support. These reflected the political, economic and regional circumstances with which different communities had to deal. In times of persecution, for example, smaller, more flexible structures were better suited for the struggle

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to preserve the faith, while in relatively peaceful times larger and more elaborate organizations provided the faithful with a richer liturgical and communal life. The structure of the Old Believers' communities also gave expression to their widely divergent understandings of how true Orthodox Christians could and should live in the End Time—a source of many of the divisions within the movement.

As we shall see, Old Believer communities combined elements of the cenobitic monastery or convent, the idiorrhythmic monastic community, the *skit*, the lay parish, the charitable institution, and the peasant village. Which of these elements predominated varied with the intentions of their leaders and the changing social and institutional structures of the larger society within which the Old Believers lived. Thus, the predominant modes of organization changed over time. Until the late 18th century, the most prominent model was the cenobitic monastery. Throughout the 19th century, the recognized centers of Old Belief were parishes with charitable institutions in the main cities of the empire. But until recently the most durable form of organization has been the *skit*. Strictly speaking, a *skit* is a small, remote monastic community. In Old Believer usage, however, the word has sometimes meant any small, remote settlement of the faithful[1] or even, in some instances, communities of considerable size. This flexible use of the term precisely reflects the "mutual penetration of the *skit* and the lay peasant settlement" that historians and ethnographers have encountered everywhere among rural Old Believers from the beginning of the movement.[2] Of course, in practice, none of these ideal organizational types existed in pure form. In many instances, Old Believer organizations are very difficult to characterize neatly, for their greatest strength has been their adaptability.

Moreover, the following discussion may not truly reflect the day-to-day reality of Old Believer life. It rests on selected statements of the Old Believers' ideals and intentions and on normative documents such as monastic rules and communal regulations. Both types of sources show how the Old Believers aspired to organize their communities and create authentically Christian ways of life. By definition, they leave out the messier problems and less desirable forms of behavior that occur when any human institu-

[1] *Slovar' russkogo iazyka*, 24: 200; *Tolkovyi slovar' russkogo iazyka*, 4: 215; and Iukhimenko, *Vygovskaia staroobriadcheskaia pustyn'*, 1: 30.

[2] Pokrovskii and Zol'nikova, *Starovery-chasovennye*, 37–58, esp. 51–52.

tion inevitably falls short of its ideals.[3] Some historians argue that, if a normative document repeatedly condemned a certain kind of behavior, it was probably a real problem for the community in question. This assumption seems to me risky, however: repeated prohibitions may just as well reflect the literary prototypes on which the rule is based or the values—or obsessions—of the rule's author. In the present state of our knowledge, there is really no escape from this dilemma. The published reports of government investigators tend to view Old Believer practices and morals in a very negative light. Nineteenth-century officials' repeated accusations of widespread sexual promiscuity among Old Believers, for example, seem to arise largely from the fact that most of them refused to marry in the official Orthodox Church and the priestless accords had only informal substitutes for the sacrament of marriage or none at all. Thus, even in traditional, outwardly respectable family relationships, almost all Old Believers canonically "lived in sin." Other than their leaders' own statements and official reports, we have little reliable information about the inner life of Old Believer communities: many potential sources in state archives and the unpublished records of the communities themselves, where they survive, remain to be explored.

Through most of the movement's history, Old Believer communities had no officially recognized status. As "unofficial" religious institutions, they governed their own affairs independently of any hierarchical structure or national organization.[4] As is well known, the priestless branch of Old Belief—those who rejected the possibility of maintaining an authentically Orthodox clergy after the death of the last priests consecrated before the Nikonian reforms—lacked a central locus of authority and experienced an unending succession of schisms over such vital issues as the possibility of Christian marriage and relations with the Russian state, the domain of the Antichrist. From these divisions emerged the largest priestless groups, the Fedoseevtsy and Pomortsy, who assumed a distinct identity at the beginning of the 18th century, and the Filippovtsy who split with the Pomortsy several decades later. Although the decision of all priestless accords to live as Orthodox Christians without clergy hardened into a tradition, their stance should be understood as a tactical response to the ultimate

[3] Goriacheva, "Ustroistvo," 255.

[4] On another type of unofficial monastic community, in this case convents within the official Orthodox Church, see Meehan, *Holy Women* and her "Popular Piety."

emergency—the End Time—not as the adoption of a new understanding of the relationship between the believer and God and his fellow Christians. Again and again, most recently in the last two decades, priestless Old Believers have displayed a yearn-ing for the restoration of a full sacramental life if only a truly Orthodox clergy can be found.

The determination of the priestly accords to continue celebrating all of the sacraments led them to retain or, if necessary, recreate traditional structures of authority. Until the mid-19th century, priestly Old Believers maintained a clergy by receiving fugitive priests from the official Orthodox Church. Since the *beglopopovtsy* (fugitive priestly) did not have bishops, however, their organizational structures resembled those of the priestless groups and responded primarily to local concerns. Moreover, because fugitive priests were difficult to recruit and their credentials often appeared dubious in Old Believer eyes, the priestly communities continually searched for a way to reestablish the episcopate. Finally, in 1846, a deposed Bosnian bishop, Amvrosii, agreed to join the Old Belief and lead a diocese from Belaia Krinitsa in Bukovina, then part of the Austrian Empire. Amvrosii soon consecrated other bishops and priests. Many Old Believer groups had deep suspicions about the canonicity and Orthodoxy of the new primate, centering on his non-Russian origins and complicated background and the fact that, contrary to canon law, he consecrated other bishops alone. In spite of these doubts, the Belaia Krinitsa hierarchy attracted widespread support because its creation restored both a full sacramental life and the traditional hierarchical structures of Orthodoxy.[5] Nevertheless, even among the Belokrinitsy, bishops had to deal with a well-established tradition of parish autonomy. Old Believer polemicists of the "Silver Age" contrasted the autonomous, active Old Believer parish, which they saw as the direct successor of the pre-Nikonian Russian parish, with the relatively powerless and passive official Orthodox parish of the day.[6]

One important branch of Old Belief lived on the frontier between the priestly and priestless traditions. The Chasovennye (or Chasovenniki) became the predominant accord in the Urals and

[5] Robson, *Old Believers*, 29–32

[6] This point is stressed in Robson, *Old Believers*, 25–28, 124–125; and Pozdeeva, "Russkoe staroobriadchestvo," 15–18.

Siberia. They began as an offshoot of the Kerzhenets communities near Nizhnii-Novgorod, which had flourished in the early 18th century and, like them, accepted fugitive priests. Over time, as candidates for the Old Believer priesthood became harder to find and many of the faithful had increasing doubts about their sincerity and morals, more and more of the Chasovenniki came to believe that the surest way to preserve true Russian Orthodoxy was to live without priests. In the end, their position carried the day. By the mid-19th century, the accord retained features of the *beglopopovshchina* in theory, but functioned as priestless in practice and in recent times, its adherents' attitudes and practices closely resemble those of the more radical priestless traditions.[7]

Apart from the Belokrinitsy, Old Believer communities, lacking hierarchical structures of authority, allied themselves with one another voluntarily and settled issues through consultation, negotiation, and debate. Following Orthodox tradition, most of the accords or branches of the movement relied upon local councils to set standards for worship and Christian conduct and to settle disputes among the faithful. These councils were made up, of course, not of bishops, but of the monastic or lay leaders of local communities. In other instances throughout their history, Old Believers used less formal negotiations or exchanges of polemical writings to address issues in dispute. Even within highly structured communities with forceful leaders such as the one in Vyg, the traditional center of the Pomortsy, major decisions required discussion with, and approval by, the members of the community.[8]

Two examples illustrate this tradition of consultation. The first is the long debate among and within the priestless accords over the possibility that true Christians could legitimately marry in the absence of clergy. An Old Believer council formally debated the issue in Novgorod in 1694. Then Feodosii Vasil'ev and Ivan Alekseev, who both sought a way for Old Believers to marry, visited Vyg to debate the question in 1703 and 1728 respectively. Finally, toward the end of the 18th century, the spokesmen of Vyg and the leaders of the new Moscow center of the Pomortsy re-opened the debate. These discussions took place in several forums—face to face

[7] Pokrovskii and Zol'nikova, *Starovery-chasovennye*, 16–59; and Robson, *Old Believers*, 32–34.

[8] Crummey, *Old Believers*, 108–110.

meetings at Vyg, exchanges of letters, and a series of councils—and ultimately ended with the parties' agreement to disagree.[9] In the second case, N. N. Pokrovskii has charted the history of the councils of the Chasovennye, scattered in small communities across Siberia, from 1723 to 1994. Their protocols record debates of the utmost seriousness about issues ranging from central questions of ecclesiastical organization to minute details of the daily life of a true Christian.[10] In many instances such as these, councils and negotiations served only to reveal the irreconcilable differences among the participants and, in that sense, contributed to the frequent schisms for which Old Belief has been notorious.

Clearly, then, no individual or community could claim to speak for all Old Believers or impose common doctrines, liturgical practices or forms of organization on the movement as a whole. Even the most important early centers of Old Belief, such as Vyg and the Moscow communities, achieved that position primarily through moral and cultural influence and the material prosperity that allowed them to aid their fellow believers.

Until the late 18th century, the most important Old Believer communities modeled themselves on the great cenobitic monasteries of Muscovy. In the clearest example, in their writings, the leaders of the Vyg community often referred to it as a "*kinoviia*" or "*monastyr'*" and claimed that it was the direct successor of the Solovki Monastery. Moreover, in constructing its buildings and creating its liturgy and devotional literature, they followed the precedent of the most renowned monasteries of pre-Nikonian Russia as far as circumstances permitted.[11] Its organizational structure also followed the model very closely. Although the head of the community was called the *nastoiatel'* or *bol'shak*, he was chosen by the community as was the tradition in Solovki and his role was

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[9] Crummey, *Old Believers*, 117–122, 203; and Nil'skii, *Semeinaia zhizn*, 1: 20, 95–96, 118–121, 150–180.

[10] Pokrovskii and Zol'nikova, *Starovery-chasovennye*, 59–104.

[11] Iukhimenko, *Vygovskaia staroobriadcheskaia pustyn'*, 1: 11, 58–64; Kuandykov, "Razvitie obshchezhitel'nogo ustava," 53–54. Kuandykov is mistaken in arguing that Vyg writers avoided the word "*monastyr'*." To mention obvious examples, Filippov's *Istoriia*, written about 1740, and the documents that made up the rule of Vyg used it regularly. Admittedly, "*obshchezhitel'stvo*," "*pustyn'*," and "*kinoviia*" occur more commonly in these texts.

very similar to that of the abbot in earlier cenobitic communities. The titles and functions of the other chief officials—cellarer, treasurer, *nariadnik*, who had responsibility for the economic ventures of the community and the workers in them, and *stroiteli*, who represented the community's interests in the main cities of the empire—copied earlier practice precisely.[12] To the traditional list of officers, Vyg added a *gorodnichii* to take care of visitors, supervise the residents' relations with the outside world, and watch over their conduct.[13]

Both the ideal type and the formal rule of cenobitic monasteries emphasize that all residents must work and worship together as equals. Ideally all property belongs to the community, whose members are fed and clothed according to need from common resources. It would be a mistake to take ideal types and normative statements absolutely literally: institutional reality was somewhat more flexible. In spite of strict prohibitions on private property including food and clothing, Solovki allowed its monks to keep their own books, icons, and money during their lifetimes. Indeed, the cloister's devotional practices encouraged monks to keep suitable books in their cells for significant periods of time.[14] The rule for the Vyg monastery and the associated Leksa convent was, if anything, even stricter than those of earlier monasteries. It made absolutely clear that monks and nuns were not to have their own food, clothing, or money. At the same time, if the cellarer approved, individuals might keep gifts of clothing from their families. Icons that new postulants brought with them to Vyg might, at the cellarer's discretion, be placed in one of the chapels (or, by implication, might remain in the individuals' cells). While the Vyg rule does not explicitly address the question of books, it is reasonable to assume that, as in Solovki, the devotional requirements and cultural activities of Vyg would require some individuals to keep books—the community's or their own—in their cells.

Moreover, studies of Solovki and Vyg suggest that, after an initial period of extreme rigor, both communities enforced their respective rules less strictly and, in particular, that exceptions were

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[12] Crummey, *Old Believers*, 107–108; Barsov, "Ulozhenie brat'ev Denisovykh," 85–105; and Savich, *Solovetskaia votchina*, 207–211, 247–248.

[13] Kuandykov, "Ideologiia obshchezhitel'stva," 98–99.

[14] Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 198–199 and her "Weaving Orthodoxy." I am most grateful to the author for making her work available to me. See also Savich, *Solovetskaia votchina*, 206–207.

made for affluent postulants and visitors. Indeed, L. K. Kuandykov has made the interesting suggestion that, from its beginnings in peasant egalitarianism, Vyg's increasing size and prosperity made it more and more similar to the great monasteries of the Russian North with their elaborate hierarchical structures and economic enterprises. Neither the exceptions to the letter of the rule nor the evidence of greater laxity and inequality over time, in my view, contradicts the fundamental aspiration of these communities' founders and their successors to build and maintain a disciplined monastic way of life or their overall success in doing so.

In the last two decades, among the large volume of new Russian publications on Old Belief, a few scholars have attempted to resurrect the argument of 19th-century populists that communities like Vyg followed not the model of the cenobitic monastery, but that of the northern peasant village. M. L. Sokolovskaia's work is a particularly clear example.[15] Although his articles take a more complex approach, Kuandykov nevertheless concludes his analysis of the Vyg rule in the first third of the 18th century by suggesting that "under the pressure of the peasant masses ... there emerged a type of community more acceptable to peasants—a synthesis of an economic *artel'* and a charitable institution (*bogadel'nia*)."[16] Even if we accept his assumption that the repeated condemnations of illicit eating, private property, and social contact between the sexes in the evolving rule indicates that these were persistent problems within the community, it is not clear on what evidence he based this conclusion. Unfortunately, to my knowledge, he did not publish the subsequent study in which he promised to spell out his argument.

The "neo-populist" scholars also emphasize the fact that, after the first generation, none of the leaders of Vyg or Leksa was formally consecrated a monk or nun even when that option was possible.[17] In my view, this unquestionably valid observation in no way contradicts the aspirations of the Denisov brothers and their colleagues to create a cenobitic monastic community governed by a precise and elaborate rule.[18] Moreover, it ignores the tradition

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[15] See, for example, Sokolovskaia, "Severnoe raskol'nicheskoe obshchezhitel'stvo."

[16] Kuandykov, "Razvitie obshchezhitel'nogo ustava," 63.

[17] Kuandykov, "Razvitie obshchezhitel'nogo ustava," 53; and Sokolovskaia, "Skladyvanie instituta 'uchitel'stva'."

[18] On the rule of Vyg and Leksa, see Kuandykov, "Razvitie obshchezhitel'nogo ustava"; Kuandykov, "Ideologiia oshchezhitel'stva"; Kuandykov, "Vy-

in many priestless groups of having prayer leaders, monks, and nuns consecrate others to follow in their footsteps. While not within the apostolic succession in a strict Orthodox or Roman Catholic sense, this practice amounted to "succession of a personal-spiritual (*pneumatischer*), but not an institutional-legal, kind."[19]

Regardless of their historiographical underpinnings, recent publications have made significant new contributions to our understanding of the structure of the Vyg community and the ways in which it functioned. First, N. S. Demkova's edition of the full text of the interrogation of Tereshka Artem'ev in 1695 sheds additional light on the structure of the first Old Believer settlements in the Vyg valley and the attitudes of their inhabitants before a cenobitic community took shape. According to Artem'ev's testimony under interrogation, large numbers of Old Believers had moved from the surrounding area into the Vyg valley, a situation of which the authorities were already uneasily aware.[20] Artem'ev described two centers some distance apart. One was a loosely organized idiorrhythmic monastic community, in which men and women lived separately. Its leader, the fugitive monk Kornilii, directed the spiritual lives of the inhabitants and allegedly provided a form of the Eucharist although he was not a priest. The second community reflected the mixture of religious militancy and social banditry epitomized by the earlier raids on the Paleostrov Monastery and subsequent mass suicides in the name of the Old Belief in 1687 and 1688.[21] Old Believer laypeople, led by Daniil Vikulich—a disciple of the fugitive monk, Ignatii, a leader of the first raid—lived in a heavily armed and fortified settlement, prepared for a siege and for self-immolation if resistance failed. According to Artem'ev, their militancy extended to raids on neighboring villages to spread the old faith, by force if necessary.[22] Even Ivan Filippov's history of Vyg, which presents the community's origins in a most respectable light, links Vikulich with the leaders of the raids on Paleostrov and

govskie sochineniia"; Kuandykov, "Rukopis' no. 3"; and the sources listed in notes 11 and 12.

[19] Hauptmann, "Das Gemeindeleiteramt," 488.

[20] Iukhimenko, "Pervye ofitsial'nye izvestiia."

[21] On the raids on Paleostrov and a similar attack on Pudozh, see Michels, *At War with the Church*, 184–185, 203–205, 207–208; Michels "Violent Old Belief"; and Crummey, *Old Believers*, 45–57.

[22] Demkova, "Vnov' naidennyi podlinnik"; and Demkova, "O nachale Vygovskoi pustyni."

tells how he organized a posse, followed a captured Old Believer, and rescued him from the guards who were taking him to prison.[23] It is a tribute to Andrei Denisov's extraordinary leadership that he was able to combine these two currents of Old Belief into a single highly organized community. At the same time, the history of Vyg is marked by a never-ending tension between the desire to build a stable refuge for the true faith and the impulse to confront the forces of the Antichrist whatever the cost.

Second, Elena Iukhimenko's exhaustive study of the literary culture of Vyg and Leksa and Kuandykov's articles on the evolution of their monastic rule provide us with a more nuanced understanding of these communities' growth and its consequences, and of the ways in which they adapted to their changing economic and political circumstances. As Kuandykov pointed out, when monastic communities achieve material prosperity and respectability—which, in Vyg's case, included de facto toleration—they tend to lose their founders' rigor and fire.[24] Iukhimenko's book demonstrates the increasing extent to which, in the last century of their existence, Vyg and Leksa came to depend on wealthy lay patrons elsewhere in Russia, particularly in St. Petersburg and Romanov. She attributes this need for outside support to the changing demographic structure of the communities. As they prospered, their populations rose, but the number of women and the elderly grew disproportionately. Thus their leaders needed money to pay hired laborers as well as to meet the government's demands for double taxes and payment in place of recruits for the army. Thus, communities that previously had been largely self-sufficient had to rely heavily on charitable donations of wealthy supporters.[25]

Third, recent scholarship has underlined the remarkable complexity of the network of Old Believer settlements surrounding the main monastery and convent. These included a number of *skity* and *poseleniia* whose residents accepted the leadership of the "Vyg fathers." Some of the more remote *skity* were small monastic communities in their own right. Other *skity* combined features of a normal northern peasant village and a monastic community. According to the Vyg rule, a *skit* had a chapel and one or two monks who were responsible for conducting priestless services

[23] Filippov, *Istoriia*, 95–98.

[24] See notes 11 and 18.

[25] Iukhimenko, *Vygovskaia staroobriadcheskaia pustyn'*, 1: 462–512, esp. 478.

and ensuring that the inhabitants observed all parts of the monastic rule except celibacy. Economically, some of the largest *skity* such as the Sheltoporozhsk concentrated on agriculture. Others were more specialized: the people of the Berezovsk Skit, for example, painted icons and fished, but did not farm at all. The *poseleniia* were essentially peasant villages of Old Believers that owed allegiance to Vyg and were expected to contribute to meeting its financial responsibilities to the government. With data from the first three 18th-century censuses (*revizii*), Sokolovskaia argues that about 99 percent of the peasants in the settlements around Vyg and Leksa originally came from the surrounding districts.[26] Moreover, once in Vyg's orbit, they moved, if at all, mainly from settlement to settlement within it.[27]

The capacity of the *skit* for combining elements of the monastic community and the village in many variations made it a particularly durable form of organization for rural Old Believers. As their later history demonstrated all too well, communities as large as Vyg and Leksa had both the advantages and disadvantages of their size. In times of peace and relative toleration, they had the skilled population and the economic resources to serve as a vital organizational center and cultural resource for fellow Old Believers all across Russia. In times of persecution, however, these characteristics made them easy targets. The government of Nicholas I succeeded in destroying Vyg, but the life of the *skity* went on.

In the present state of scholarship, we know far less about the internal structure of the other major concentrations of Old Believers in the 18th and early 19th centuries such as Kerzhenets, Vetka and Starodub in Belarus, and Irgiz in the lower Volga valley. For one thing, the brevity and lack of precision of the sources at our disposal sometimes make it difficult to tell whether Old Believer settlements in these areas were monasteries like Vyg, or *skity*.

In Vetka and Irgiz, some monastic communities grew to considerable size. One Vetka monastery, the Lavrent'ev, reportedly had

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[26] Spock, "The Solovki Monastery," 183–185 makes a similar observation about the origins of the monks of Solovki.

[27] Sokolovskaia, "Krest'ianskii mir" and her "Skladyvanie"; Kuandykov, "Ideologiia obshchezhitel'stva," 95–96; Kuandykov, "Rukopis' no. 3," 135 and his "Filippovskie polemicheskie sochineniia," 115–117. See also Pashkov, "Staroobriadcheskie poseleniia." As opposed to the other authors, Sokolovskaia insists that the only difference between a *skit* and a *poselenie* was size: both were lay peasant villages ("Krest'ianskii mir," 272).

more than one thousand monks in the mid-18th century and a nearby convent had one hundred nuns.[28] The Lavrent'ev maintained a very strict rule with one exception that distinguished it from Vyg—its wealthiest members kept their private property.[29] Others had more than two hundred monks, while in each of the women's settlements lived about thirty nuns and numerous laywomen.

Scattered throughout the frontier areas of Vetka and Starodub were many smaller settlements of various types. Some of them resembled Vyg in its very first years in that they brought together Old Believer monks or nuns and fugitive laypeople. Moreover, small *skity* of monks and nuns and settlements of Old Believer peasants and their families existed side by side. Indeed, in some instances, very small communities of nuns or monks lived inside lay villages.[30]

The priestly Irgiz monasteries, settled initially by refugees from Vetka, bore a closer resemblance to Vyg at its zenith. At their height in 1828, the three main monasteries, the Upper, Middle, and Lower, and two convents, the Uspenie and the Pokrovsk, had a total of about three thousand monks and nuns. The men's communities were cenobite monasteries led by elected abbots and councils of elders. Two other officers worked with the abbot, a treasurer and an *ustavshchik,* who supervised the internal life of the community and enforced the monastic rule. Early in their histories, the leaders of the Irgiz monasteries strictly prohibited private property and maintained common worship and a common table. As these communities grew in size and prosperity, however, they too relaxed their initial rigor. From their foundations, the Pokrovsk and Uspensk convents had looser, idiorrhythmic structures, and, unlike Leksa, had no formal ties to the men's communities other than the exchange of the products of their farming and handicraft work. Prominent laymen from outside had a stronger influence over the decisions of the leaders of the Irgiz communities than was the case in Vyg except perhaps in the final decades of the latter's existence. Although we have too little detailed information on the monasteries in Vetka and Irgiz to make a definitive

[28] Vurgraft, *Staroobriadchestvo*, 62–63; and Lileev, *Iz istorii raskola*, 1: 361.
[29] On the Lavrent'ev Monastery, Mel'nikov, "Ocherki popovshchiny," 307–351.
[30] Lileev, *Iz istorii raskola*, 1: 371–373, 384–392.

judgment, it would seem that Vyg, at its height, most closely followed the pre-Nikonian model of a cenobitic monastery.[31]

All of the large monastic communities of the 18th and early 19th centuries share two important characteristics. First, whenever possible, they provided books, icons, vestments, and, in the case of Irgiz, priests for their followers throughout Russia, and provided the children of the faithful with traditional Orthodox schooling.[32] Second, because of their size and visibility and their role in spreading the Old Belief, the imperial government eventually destroyed them in one way or another. The authorities closed the Vetka communities by force in 1735 and again in 1764, although the Lavrent'ev Monastery survived. The gendarmes of Nicholas I closed Vyg and the Upper and Middle Monasteries of Irgiz and forced the Lower Monastery to join the *edinoverie* (uniate church).[33] Understandably, after the mid-19th century, the Old Believers built no more cenobitic monasteries as large and complex as Vyg.

Nevertheless, throughout the history of Old Belief, the ideal of the classic cenobitic monastery retained its power. Even in 20th-century Siberia, the Chasovenniki would still have preferred to build large monastic communities like Vyg if circumstances had permitted.[34] In some instances, later Old Believer communities retained some of the features of the great monasteries of the past, albeit on a smaller scale. For example, migrants from Irgiz created a number of monastic *skity* in the Cheremshan area near the lower Volga. Some of them reached a significant size: at its largest, the Uspensk Skit had 130 monks.[35] The Kurenevsk Monastery and convents in Podolia, although small, took very traditional forms. The men's community, in which 128 monks, novices, and laymen lived at the beginning of the 20th century, followed strictly cenobitic patterns. Its organization had many traditional features including an abbot, treasurer, and council. The first of the two convents, which had as many as 42 nuns and novices, followed more idiorrhythmic practices under which the sisters did not keep a com-

[31] Crummey, *Old Believers*, 128–131; Vurgraft, *Staroobriadchestvo*, 125–128; and Sokolov, *Raskol*, 238–274.

[32] Lileev, *Iz istorii raskola*, 1: 216–222; and Sokolov, *Raskol*, 270.

[33] Sokolov, *Raskol*, chaps. 6 and 7. Founded in 1800 with the blessing of the imperial govenment, the *edinoverie* created parishes within the synodal Russian Orthodox Church in which Old Believers could worship using the pre-Nikonian liturgy.

[34] Pokrovskii and Zol'nikova, *Starovery-chasovennye*, 434–435.

[35] Vurgraft, *Staroobriadchestvo*, 306–308.

mon table and owned personal property. The second convent, founded in 1908 by the energetic Abbess Faina, appears to have been more tightly organized. In spite of their differences in structure, both convents customarily deferred to the decisions of the monastery on the most important issues and all three of the Kurenevsk settlements owed ultimate allegiance to the national center of the Belokrinitsy in Moscow. The last remnants of monastic communities in Sheremshan and Kurenevsk survived into the late 1920s and early 1930s respectively. The end of the Kurenevsk monastery was particularly brutal: in the horrible conditions of 1933, local "activists" took its books and icons for firewood or lumber for a pig barn and the few remaining monks starved to death![36]

The emergence of the Preobrazhensk and Rogozhsk Kladbishcha and the Moninsk Molennaia in Moscow in the reign of Catherine II radically changed the balance of power within Old Belief in several ways.[37] First, they were located in the second city of the empire, the historic capital of Orthodox Russia. Second, they were, in essence, parishes consisting largely of laypeople, not monastic communities. Third, because of their central location and their founders' energy and wealth, they quickly assumed leadership within the movement. On controversial issues like the canonicity of marriage, older communities like Vyg found themselves on the defensive, responding to initiatives from Moscow.

For a variety of reasons, the Moscow centers combined many elements in complex patterns. First of all, they belonged to different branches of Old Belief. The priestly Old Believers of the Rogozhsk community strove to follow the traditional Orthodox structure of bishops and priests, and to retain all of the sacraments of Eastern Orthodoxy. Until the middle of the 19th century, like all of the priestly communities, they had no hierarchy of their own and depended entirely on fugitive clergy. As an escape from this dilemma, the leaders of Rogozhsk welcomed the establishment of the Belokrinitsk hierarchy: the community eventually became the

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[36] Taranets, *Kurenevskoe trimonastyr'e*, 46–58, 74–77; Taranets, "Kurenevskoe trimonastyr'e (istoriia Kurenevskikh monastyrei)"; and Taranets, *Staroobriadchestvo Podolii*, 102–112, 121–130.

[37] On the Moscow communities, Ryndziunskii, "Staroobriadcheskaia organizatsiia"; Goriacheva, "Ustroistvo" and "Istochniki"; Iukhimenko, *Staroobriadcheskii tsentr*; Mel'nikov, "Ocherki popovshchiny," 204–307; Popov, "Materialy"; Paert, *Old Believers*, 59–108; and Vasil'ev, "Organizatsiia."

residence of the Old Believer Archbishop of Moscow. The Preobrazhensk and Moninsk communities belonged to the Fedoseevtsy and Pomortsy priestless accords respectively. Lay leaders conducted the prayer services of these parishes—in Western terms, an elaborate form of the Ministry of the Word without the Eucharist—and administered such sacraments as their accords had saved from the ruins of authentic Orthodoxy—baptism and, in the case of Moninsk, marriage. Preobrazhensk had a reputation for the extreme rigor and precision of its services as well as its militancy in rejecting all possibility of Christian marriage and prayers for the imperial family.[38]

Second, legally these communities registered themselves as cemeteries (*kladbishcha*) and almshouses (*bogadelennye doma*), not parishes, whence their official titles and popular names. For one thing, Old Believer parishes and monastic communities, even those that enjoyed de facto toleration in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, were illegal. Moreover, the circumstances in which the Moscow communities emerged from underground underscored their role as charitable foundations. In 1771, at the height of the terrible epidemic of plague in Moscow, both Il'ia Kovylin, the formidable founder of Preobrazhensk, and the leaders of Rogozhsk received permission to set up quarantine blockades on the outskirts of Moscow, hospitals to care for the sick, and cemeteries to bury the dead. In dealing with officialdom in the comparatively tolerant times of Catherine II and Alexander I, they operated within the legal guidelines for all charitable institutions and carefully created the impression that they ministered only to fellow Old Believers. The leaders of the synodal church, however, suspected with considerable justification that service to the sick and needy often led to conversion to Old Belief.

The circumstances in which they were founded dictated that the Moscow communities would be complex institutions composed of many elements. Throughout their history, they maintained almshouses, hospitals, and cemeteries. Somewhat less conspicuously, their chapels and prayer houses functioned as parish churches that served the needs of the priestly and priestless Old Believers of the city. Moreover, the visibility that their legal status gave these communities made them the most important centers of their respective accords in all of Russia.

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[38] Vurgraft, *Staroobriadchestvo*, 175, 232–235, 239–242.

Throughout their checkered history, the status of charitable institution saved the Moscow communities from extinction in difficult times. The history of their relations with the imperial government followed exactly the same patterns as that of the other Old Believer centers. After the years of de facto toleration under Catherine II and Alexander I, the imperial regime began to attack on several fronts. In Alexander's last years and the reign of Nicholas I, the government prosecuted Old Believer priests, closed the chapels and churches or gave them to the *edinovertsy*, arrested and exiled their leaders and prominent lay supporters, and put the charitable institutions under its direct control. Like Vyg, Moninsk did not survive the assaults of Nicholas's gendarmes. Preobrazhensk and Rogozhsk bowed before the storm, but lived on, reemerged into the open as charities beginning in the reign of Alexander III, and enjoyed a "golden age" of freedom of worship and social ministry between 1905 and 1917.

Third, prominent merchants and other laymen established and ran the Moscow communities. Lay leadership was a central feature throughout Old Belief in the late 18th and 19th centuries. As we have noted, even in monastic communities like Vyg and the Irgiz settlements, wealthy lay supporters exercised more and more influence as the years passed. In Preobrazhensk and even in priestly Rogozhsk, the ultimate authorities were the lay overseers, not the clergy.

What were the aspirations of the founders of the Moscow communities? In spite of the Old Believers' reputation for dealing with the government in a devious manner, Il'ia Kovylin was remarkably honest in a petition to Alexander I in 1808. In the plan for Preobrazhensk that accompanied his request to renew the community's legal status as a charitable institution and his appeal for freedom from outside interference, he claimed that its central mission consisted of serving ill, elderly, and orphaned Old Believers' physical and spiritual needs. "The times and circumstances demand that we build almshouses and hospitals for the care and tranquility of elderly and sick Old Believers and orphan children, and a chapel in order to offer prayers to Almighty God according to the stipulations of the old books (*staropechatnye knigi*)."[39] In another passage, he described the community's objectives: "to conduct services unhindered according to the ancient regulations and rule of the Holy Fathers laid out in the old book and to provide a

[39] Popov, "Materialy," 131–132.

safe refuge for the needy among our brethren."[40] He also made clear that the community provided housing for craftsmen such as carpenters, stonemasons, and plasterers temporarily in Moscow without their families. If Kovylin's statements misled the government, it was only in deemphasizing the importance of Old Believer worship and ignoring the possibility that service to the needy could be a form of missionary activity—understandable tactical choices under the circumstances.

In spite of their prominence and the large number of publications about them, we have relatively little detailed information about the inner structure and workings of the Moscow communities. Historians and polemicists have paid much more attention to the merchant dynasties that supported them and the polemical battles among them. Fortunately, we have many physical descriptions of the communities' buildings and sketches of their organizational structure at various times in their history. For example, Kovylin's plan describes a community of about eight hundred residents in two sets of buildings separated by inner walls. In one lived elderly and ill men and the out-of-town craftsmen who lodged there; in the other were the women and the orphans. The community committed itself to educating the children in reading, writing, industriousness, and a useful trade by which they could support themselves. The orphans were to remain in the community up to the age of 17 when they were expected to move out. Each section had its own chapel or prayer rooms. A group of guardians (*popechiteli*)—all successful businessmen and honorable citizens, Kovylin insisted—administered the community. One of their most important functions was to manage the bequests to the community by investing them wisely or lending them to reliable borrowers.[41] Although Kovylin's plan mentioned these activities in the form of a request for official approval, acceptance of bequests and making loans were probably already well-established practices in Preobrazhensk. For one thing, those Fedoseevtsy who took seriously Kovylin's teachings on the impossibility of canonical marriage either remained celibate or lived in informal unions and therefore could not have legitimate heirs. For many, the logical heir was Preobrazhensk.

[40] Popov, "Materialy," 134.

[41] Popov, "Materialy," 31–39.

T. D. Goriacheva's and E. M. Iukhimenko's new studies give us a detailed analysis of the Rogozhskoe community at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Although her data come from a much later time and she describes a priestly community, her findings are remarkably similar to Kovylin's and P. G. Ryndziunskii's less detailed descriptions of Preobrazhensk as well as to her comparative data on the Chubinsk almshouse in St. Petersburg. The number of residents of the community ranged from more than 1000 in the 1830s to 444 at the beginning of 1918. Iukhimenko states that the Rogozhk almshouse had 558 residents in 1872 and 730 in 1877, with a heavy predominance of women.[42] In the mid-19th century, Preobrazhensk was slightly larger: it had 508 male and 1119 female residents. According to the documents defining the legal status of Rogozhsk, all residents had to be Old Believers by family tradition, legal residents of Moscow, and poor or ill. In both Rogozhsk and Preobrazhensk, the number of parishioners who lived outside the walls of the community ran into the thousands. According to one rough estimate, Preobrazhensk had up to 10,000 parishioners in 1819.[43] In 1841, according to officials records, the priests of Rogozhsk served as confessors for 3,028 parishioners: the real number was undoubtedly much higher. According to Iukhimenko, Rogozhsk had about 20,000 parishioners at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and the figure rose to between 35,000 and 68,000 in the 1820s.[44]

The structure of governance of the Moscow communities reflected their legal status as charitable institutions. Even in priestly Rogozhsk, all of the recognized officers were laymen.[45] There all of the parishioners who owned property in Moscow had the right to choose electors (*vybornye*) of whom there were thirty in 1869. The electors in turn selected two guardians (*popechiteli*), normally wealthy businessmen, for three-year terms to manage the community's finances and the care of the residents. The electors were to ensure that the guardians carried out these duties responsibly and had the right to replace them if they did not. Under the Ustav (Regulation) of 1883, the council of electors also chose three priests and two deacons to celebrate the Sacraments. The number of clergy rose steadily to six priests and three deacons in 1906, and

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[42] Iukhimenko, *Staroobriadcneskii tsentr*, 71.

[43] Vasil'ev, "Organizatsiia," 586.

[44] Iukhimenko, *Staroobriadcheskii tsentr*, 20; Makarov, *Ocherk*, 28.

[45] Goriacheva, "Ustroistvo" and "Istochniki"; Ryndziunskii, "Staroobriadcheskaia organizatsiia," 202–213.

in the fall of 1917, the community adopted plans to add still more.[46] Real executive power, however, clearly lay with the guardians whose responsibilities included everything from the community's investment portfolio to the selection of singers for the choir. Their authority, even over spiritual matters, deeply troubled the Old Believer clergy: in 1906, Old Believer Bishop Alexander of Riazan' published a sharp criticism of this situation under a pseudonym.

Even though the vast majority of the residents of Preobrazhensk did not follow a monastic rule, the guardians attempted to maintain strict order through a myriad of regulations enforced by officers whom they appointed. In this regard, their rigor—pedantry perhaps—resembles that of the Vyg fathers. Under their direction, an *ekonom* received and registered the bequests on which the treasury depended and a *kontorshchik* kept the financial records and conducted official correspondence. A host of lesser officers made sure that residents and visitors to the community behaved appropriately. The *dvorovyi starosta* screened visitors and made sure that their paperwork was in order. They, the *storozha, nadziratel* (male) and *nadziratel'nitsy* (female) made sure that the residents attended services daily, returned to the community at an appropriate hour each evening, and observed proper decorum. They were to keep beggars outside the gates and away from the cemetery. To this structure, the community in 1897 added the office of female guardians who served for three years and had responsibility for the female residents as well as for the community's food and kitchens.

Although our information is less detailed, the other urban communities apparently had very similar systems of governance. In the relatively small Chubykinsk community of St. Petersburg, the parishioners chose 40 electors who selected three guardians for five-year terms. In this instance, however, the guardians had authority only over the community's finances. Parallel to the guardians was a governing committee of five members plus a chair, which handled relations with the outside world. In the St. Petersburg case, the distinction between the prerogatives of the guardians and the committee was not entirely clear.

In Preobrazhensk, the administrative structure had grown in complexity from Kovylin's time to the mid-19th century. By then, the governing body of the community was a council of 26 men from whom were chosen the five guardians who, as in Rogozhsk,

[46] Iukhimenko, *Staroobriadcheskii tsentr*, 85–91.

managed day-to-day administration. The wealthiest benefactors of Preobrazhensk normally became guardians and even among them one leader enjoyed overwhelming influence just as Kovylin had. In the mid-19th century, that man was F. A. Guchkov, scion of the wealthiest Moscow business family.

Although the main Moscow communities and those in St. Petersburg were governed by laymen to serve lay parishioners and residents, we should not forget their monastic component. They usually contained the "cells" of at least a few *startsy* (male monastics) or *staritsy* (female monastics), especially the latter. In 1845, for example, 164 nuns and novices lived in their own separate quarters in Rogozhsk.[47] Later in the century, the Fedoseevtsy maintained an idiorrhythmic convent—labeled a "charitable institution" for the benefit of officialdom—on the outskirts of St. Petersburg.[47a]

For the most part, the complex mixture of elements in the Old Believers' urban communities served them well. As their leaders hoped, for much of their history they provided thousands of parishioners with the full repertoire of worship services and carried out their charitable missions. Their imposing buildings provided an Old Believer counterpoise to the great cathedrals of the synodal church.[48] Like Vyg before them, they provided their followers throughout Russia with books and icons. And, as historians of the Russian economy have so often stressed, the Moscow communities, especially Preobrazhensk, provided credit for aspiring Old Believer entrepreneurs and sheltered peasant migrants to the city, who often became workers in the wealthy Old Believers' enterprises. In short, the Moscow communities' position as the predominant centers of Old Belief legitimized lay leadership and made the combination of parish and charitable institution the primary organizational model, particularly in urban areas. In the short years of the early 20th century when they were free to function with limited outside interference, the urban parishes of all of the main Old Believer groups enjoyed a similar degree of autonomy and initiative.[49]

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[47] Iukhimenko, *Staroobriadcheskii tsentr*, 2.

[47a] For example, Zhivotov, *Tserkovnyi raskol*, 54, 66–67; V. N., "Raskol v Peterburge"; Makarov, *Ocherk*, 69; and the sources mentioned in note 37.

[48] Robson, *Old* Believers, 53–74.

[49] For example, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the lay guardians of the Rogozhsk Kladbishche had a great deal of power over the clergy who served the community. See Goriacheva, "Ustroistvo"; and Goriacheva, "Istochniki," 129ff. and n2.

To be sure, the experience of Preobrazhensk, Rogozhsk and the other urban communities under Nicholas I and Stalin also demonstrates the vulnerability to attack of such centrally located, visible, and prosperous religious centers. Nevertheless, they have endured and remain national centers of the priestless and priestly Old Believers to this day.

After the October Revolution, priestly and priestless parishes continued to function. After a brief period of respite in which the new regime concentrated its anti-religious fervor on the mainstream Orthodox Church, they faced the same trials and tribulations as all of the other major Christian denominations—arrests of leaders and active parishioners, confiscation of many church buildings, and pressure to follow the dictates of the Soviet regime. At the same time, if they met the state's requirements, they were at least able to continue public worship in some of their church buildings and maintain their traditional form of governance under the watchful eye of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. As compared with their Russian Orthodox counterparts, the Old Believers had the advantage of their long experience in adapting to hostile governments.

Roy Robson's study of the Grebenshchikovskaia Obshchina in Riga between 1945 and 1955 addresses several of the central issues that almost certainly affected Old Believer parishes throughout the Soviet Union. Founded in 1760, the Riga community closely resembled its model, Preobrazhensk in Moscow. Named in honor of a wealthy benefactor, it consisted of an almshouse, a large parish church known for the authenticity and rigor of its services, and schools.[50] After 1917, of course, the history of the Riga Old Believers and their circumstances in Latvia differed significantly from those of their brethren in Russia. As Robson notes, the Grebenshchikovskaia Obshchina suffered severe persecution immediately during Latvia's annexation by the Soviet Union and during the German occupation. After the end of World War II, however, the community regained ownership of its main buildings, including the church and the attached living quarters, and re-established its traditional structure of governance. All the same, relations with the Soviet authorities were a mixed blessing and the source of high tension within the community. During Stalin's last years, the leading Old Believer intellectual from Riga, I. N. Zavoloko, remained in the gulag

[50] Vurgraft, *Staroobriadchestvo*, 78.

and other arrests took place from time to time. Within the Obshchina, two factions struggled for power. The leader of the self-styled "progressives," the community's rector, I. U. Vakon'ia, made good relations with the Ministry of Religious Affairs his highest priority and was not above sending the authorities regular reports on the internal affairs of the Obshchina. The conservatives, led by Fathers P. F. Fadeev and A. V. Volkov, strove for a more independent stance in order to preserve the priestless Old Believer tradition in all its purity. The clash of personalities as well as of programs led on occasion to stormy meetings, shouting matches, and competing liturgical observances. Not surprisingly, in the years Robson investigated, the progressive group maintained its leadership of the community.[51] As far as I know, the history of other urban Old Believer parishes in the Soviet period, including the main centers in Moscow and St. Petersburg, has yet to be written.

In rural areas, Old Believer life revolved around *skity* just as it had in earlier periods of persecution. Both ideological and practical considerations led to the persistence of this pattern of organization. In many cases, the founders and inhabitants of the *skity* consciously followed the urging of the hermits of the early Eastern Church to flee from a sinful word to the "desert" and a life of prayer and self-denial. N. N. Pokrovskii and N. D. Zol'nikova have pointed out that Siberian Old Believers received these teachings directly in translations of St. Efrem the Syrian—several of his sermons, particularly Sermon 105 on the Apocalypse, and "On Admonition and Repentance"—and indirectly through the Old Believer literary and oral tradition. The more militant the Old Believers, the greater the lure of the *pustyn'* (hermitage)! Life in small isolated communities strongly appealed to the Filippovtsy and the more radical of the Chasovenniki.[52] And, for the Beguny or Stranniki, the most radical groups of all, flight from the world and all of its institutions was the only truly Christian way of life.[53] The *skit* also had practical advantages. Since it was a structure smaller, less visible, and more flexible than the monastery or the parish, it was especially suited to times of severe persecution and to branches of the Old Belief whose militancy made them special targets of the government. In Soviet times, rural Old Believers had little choice but to rely on it.

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[51] Robson, "Old Believers and the Soviet State."

[52] Pokrovskii, "Krest'ianskii pobeg"; Kuandykov, "Filippovskie polemicheskie sochineniia"; Pokrovskii and Zol'nikova, *Starovery-chasovennye*, 16–19, 96, 111, 435.

[53] Mal'tsev, *Starovery-stranniki*, 31–32, 225–226.

By the 20th century, the Old Believer *skit* had an ancient and honorable history. Between the late 17th and mid-19th centuries, government inspectors, attempting to control the movement's spread, had unearthed evidence of innumerable small settlements of Old Believers in remote corners throughout the Russian empire—in the European North, Belarus, the Cossack country, the Urals, and Siberia. They ranged from miniature monasteries in which the residents took vows of celibacy and followed a rule of life under the direction of a monk or nun to communities of devout laypeople, led by a monk. As we have seen, some functioned as satellites of large monastic communities like Vyg and the Irgiz monasteries or were parts of a closely knit network of Old Believer settlements while the founders of others opted for complete isolation in the most remote locations imaginable. In spite of this remarkable variety, all shared one characteristic—close relations with the local peasant population from which many of their inhabitants had come.[54]

Our best study of *skity* in the Soviet period appears in Pokrovskii and Zol'nikova's new book on the history and polemical literature of the Chasovennye in the Urals and Siberia. As before, the desire of their founders for a rigorous Christian life in the "desert" and the policies of the government both shaped them. Siberian *skity* were very small, most frequently of one to 15 residents, and followed a cenobitic way of life with common worship, property, work, and meals. An individual hermit sometimes lived alone within a short distance of a small convent or lay village and served as its spiritual director. The largest, the Sungul'sk Skit in the Urals, which flourished in the 1920s and early 1930s, had up to 40 residents. The number of residents of course varied with the circumstances: from the beginning of Orthodox monasticism in Russia, the charisma of the founder of a hermitage often attracted new disciples, thus gradually transforming an isolated settlement into a monastery.

In the Soviet period, residents of the Siberian *skity* often responded to persecution by migrating long distances to safer areas under extremely risky and arduous conditions. In the early years of collectivization, the migrations of devout Old Believers formed part

[54] *Opisanie dokumentov i del*, 1: 185–186, 588; 23: 653–54, 971–974; Malyshev, "Une communauté"; Pokrovskii, "Krest'ianskii pobeg"; Kuandykov, "Filippovskie polemicheskie sochineniia"; Pokrovskii and Zol'nikova, *Starovery-chasovennye*, 16–19; Pashkov, "Staroobriadcheskie poseleniia"; Men'shakova, "Pecherskoe staroobriadchestvo"; Snesarev, "Verkhne-Chirskaia stanitsa," no. 7: 214–15.

of a larger pattern of resistance to the new order in the countryside. Given the mixture of pressures driving the migrations, the resulting settlements sometimes combined features of a monastic community and peasant village. In one example of such a "*kvaziskit,*" in Pokrovskii and Zol'nikova's phrase, a group of devout women lived together without formally becoming nuns. When it became clear that, as women living alone in a harsh environment, they could not support themselves, they moved in with their relatives' families in lay peasant settlements but continued to follow a disciplined celibate life. In other instances, women's communities depended entirely on the support of neighboring men's *skity* or on the nearby lay population to which they provided spiritual direction.[55] In the most difficult times, the extreme flexibility of these arrangements was invaluable.

In addition, especially among the priestless groups, Old Believer villagers often lived normal lay lives in their commune or collective farm under the spiritual leadership of a lay *nastavnik* (mentor) whose authority they accepted—or on occasion rejected—as the spirit moved them. The community in the Pechora region described by V. I. Malyshev from documents of the mid-19th century, for example, consisted entirely of laypeople that elected a *starosta* and *nastavnik* from among themselves to provide administrative and spiritual leadership.[56] This pattern has proved remarkably durable: participants in scholarly research expeditions have encountered it in recent years. In this situation, Old Believer villagers make special efforts to distinguish their faith and way of life from that of non-believers and adherents of competing Old Believer factions. In the Upper Kama valley, for example, the priestless distinguished between the most rigorous believers, the "*sobornye*" and rank-and-file Old Believers, the "*mirskie.*" Under the leadership of *dukhovniki* (confessors) and *ustavshchiki*, the former held prayer services in private homes and set and enforced the strict system of taboos that mark off the faithful from the others.[57] How long these arrangements will continue to survive is difficult to say. According to I. V. Pozdeeva, Old Believer life in the Upper Kama villages has changed radically in the last few years.

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[55] Pokrovskii and Zol'nikova, *Starovery-chasovennye*, 29–47, 428–429.

[56] Malyshev, "Communauté."

[57] *Russkie pis'mennye i ustnye traditsii*, 40–42, 97–99; Vlasov, "On the History," 65–70. For a lyrical description of researchers' experiences in Old Believer settlements in Siberia, Pokrovskii, *Puteshestvie*, 19–37.

Each of the fundamental forms of Old Believer organization has contributed to the survival of the movement. The remote monastic communities served as refuges and centers of organization in difficult times and provided the cultural resources—liturgical books, polemical defenses of the Old Faith, icons—to their scattered brothers and sisters throughout the empire. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the leading lay parishes made the Old Believers a significant force in national life. And, in Soviet times, the remote *skity* and villages, along with the more traditional parishes for all of their vulnerability, kept the faith alive in the face of unrelenting persecution.

In facing the challenges of life in the 21st century, contemporary Old Believers hark back to their earlier experiences, particularly in the "Silver Age" of the early 20th century, in order to identify the patterns of organization and behavior that will best serve their needs. The much-discussed decision of many priestless communities in Russia and abroad to accept priests of one jurisdiction or another and restore full sacramental life places the parish and the ecclesiastical hierarchy to which it owes allegiance at the center of Old Believer life once again. This may suggest that, in the best of times—few and far between in the Old Believers' historical experience—the parish with its associated institutions provides the fullest liturgical ministry and pastoral support for members of both priestly and priestless traditions. Whatever the future may bring, we may reasonably assume that the Old Believers will continue to adjust creatively to the world around them and draw useful lessons from their rich institutional history.

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THE TRADITION OF ELDERS (*STARTSY*) IN 19TH-CENTURY RUSSIA

Nickolas Lupinin

The study of elders in the Russian Church entails numerous considerations. In varying degrees these reflect historical permutations of Russian piety and spirituality as well as the relationship of the elders to monasticism, society, and administrative structures, both ecclesiastical and secular. Not least is their influence on their many spiritual sons and daughters, both lay and monastic. It is clear that despite differences of style, character, education, and impact, there are similarities among many elders in the latter part of the 18th century and throughout the 19th. This is the period of their true efflorescence through the 1830s, when Fr. Leonid's eldership at Optina Pustyn' takes on a large popular dimension, signaling the onset of the most prominent phase.[1]

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[1] My discussion will not treat the history of elders prior to this time frame. Though the concept of an elder, especially as spiritual father (*pater spiritualis*) exists by the fourth century, and substantive stress on ascesis and theosis was evidenced in the monastic setting, the practice of eldership found limited expression on Russian soil. It is not seen in the Kievan period, is sometimes attributed to St. Sergii of Radonezh, and then, with the major exception of Nil Sorskii, who is universally seen as a great elder, goes into quiescence until the 19th century and a generation

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It is a striking phenomenon. Monks, anchorites, hegumens, hieromonks, and bearers of the schema, from whose ranks most elders derived, often became associated with the public projection and force of piety. These were, after all, men who spearheaded the contemplative revival,[2] men for whom, in the words of Feofan the Recluse (1802–1894), the "interior hermitage" was paramount, for whom the silence of the heart was a living source: "Simplicity and calm, purity of heart and restraint, inner balance and, on the other hand, constant spiritual tension, sober and courageous virility, and finally gentleness and profound humility."[3] These efforts, these solaces, the inner struggles, the absence of pretension, the life of constant prayer are common particularizations of elders.

Faith was a gift, as the great Optina elder Makarii (1788–1860) said, but it did not abolish freedom or responsibility.[4] And freedom and responsibility were invariably applied by the elders in a spiritual framework to reinforce their own religious path. It heightened personal spiritual vigilance or watchfulness. "Watchfulness is a spiritual method that, if sedulously practiced over a long period, completely frees us with God's help from impassioned words and evil actions. It leads, in so far as this is possible, to a sure knowledge of the inapprehensible God, and helps us to penetrate the divine and hidden mysteries."[5]

Makarii, like most elders, consistently alluded to and cited the early Church Fathers (or Holy Fathers as the elders preferred to call them). The principle lessons of spiritual life were to be learned from them for the ultimate wisdom was to be found in their writings. This was made possible by the appearance of *The Philokalia* (*Dobrotoliubie*) in Russia in 1793, abetted greatly by Metropolitan Gavriil of St. Petersburg. Other editions appeared throughout the 19th century.

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or so preceding it. This is not to imply that aspects of eldership such as ascesis, mysticism, hesychastic prayer, and spiritual direction were not in evidence.

[2] The term "contemplative revival" appears frequently; e.g., Nichols, "Orthodox Elders," passim; and Meehan, "Popular Piety," 85.

[3] Arseniev, *Russian Piety,* 118.

[4] Macarius, *Russian Letters*, 57.

[5] *Philokalia: Complete Text*, vol. 1. St. Hesychios the Priest, "On Watchfulness and Holiness," 162.

The enormously seminal work of the elder Paisii Velichkovskii (1722–1794) in translating this collection from the Greek into Slavonic provided the impetus for not only the study and absorption of the texts of the Church Fathers, but also affected the recrudescence of monasticism in a substantial number of cases. In his work on Paisii, Chetverikov notes additionally that the excellence of Paisii's translations was not a negligible factor. Nor was the training in translating, asceticism, and a strict monasticism that Paisii gave to numerous monks.[6] Chetverikov ends his work on Paisii with a long chapter on Elder Paisii's pupils (whether on Mt. Athos, in Moldavia, or in Russia) and their effect on "Orthodox *starchestvo*."

It is an impressive list and no attempt to cite from it is made here for the author's concluding phrase in his discussion provides the clue: "To this brief list (which is far from complete) of Starets Paisii's pupils, we consider it necessary to add a list of lavras, monasteries, convents, hermitages, sketes, and communities that received from him or his pupils their statutes, startsy, or superior, or that had his pupils and followers among their brethren. Again, we caution that this list is far from complete."[7] Chetverikov then proceeds to list 107 monastic establishments.

Paisii's institutive and unprecedented influence is increasingly being documented and now constitutes axiomatic significance. The large body of writings by the Church Fathers proved spiritually and intellectually invigorating. John Meyendorff wryly noted that there were actually more works of the Fathers translated into Russian than into any other European language.[8] Many elders possessed a large number of books. Elder Antonii Optinskii, who served as hegumen of St. Nicholas Monastery in Maloiaroslavets from 1839 to 1853, donated his collection of 2,000 volumes to the Optina library while in retirement.[9] Makarii, who also had a large collection of books, was famous for the directorship of the patristic books publishing project at Optina Pustyn'. Fr. Leonid Kavelin, himself Makarii's disciple and one of the principal assistants in this

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[6] Chetverikov, *Starets Paisii Velichkovskii*, 233. The discipline was even applied to the question of cleanliness, for which Paisii's monasteries in Moldavia were known. Such was the case later for Optina Pustyn' and other well-ordered monasteries.

[7] Chetverikov, *Starets Paisii Velichkovskii*, 316.

[8] Meyendorff, *Orthodox Church*, 107.

[9] Sederholm, *Elder Anthony*, 99.

project, understandably devoted attention to this subject in his well-known biography of Makarii.

This publication of patristics is also intriguing for the links of the elders to the external world that it exhibits. Natalia Petrovna Kireevskaia had been Makarii's spiritual daughter since 1838. In 1845, her husband, Ivan Kireevskii, the editor of *Moskvitianin,* published an article by Makarii on Elder Paisii Velichkovskii. While visiting the couple on their estate in 1846, Makarii was enjoined to commence the publication of patristic texts. The three obtained the blessing of Metropolitan Filaret of Moscow and in 1847 the first volume in the series was published. It was a life of Paisii. By the time Makarii died, a total of 16 volumes had appeared, including treatises by Nil Sorskii, Isaac the Syrian, Symeon the New Theologian and Abba Dorotheus. Makarii's principal assistants in the editing and publication process were, in addition to Kavelin, other brethren of the Skete of St. John the Forerunner at Optina: hieromonk Amvrosii (1812–1891), the future great elder; monk Iuvenalii, later to be archbishop of Vilnius; and Palladii, who would become a hierodeacon at Optina. Interestingly, even the publication of the Holy Fathers had to be cleared by the censors.[10] Thus we have the factor of the two greatest elders, Makarii and Amvrosii, being involved in the editing, publication, and dissemination of patristic texts.

The texts published under Makarii's direction were translated either into Slavonic or Russian (though he favored Russian, it was not always allowed). By the 1860s, however, most texts issued were being translated into Russian. The question of language aside, we still are presented with a picture of the overwhelming influence of major treatises from the Orthodox tradition. So, the Fathers and their teaching are unquestionably paramount and it is their dictums that serve as guideposts to the spiritual children and disciples of the elders.

The writings of St. Tikhon Zadonskii (1724–1783) were well received and disseminated; they also stressed reliance on patristics. Elders reading Tikhon would see many recognizable modes in his writing; many mystical and ascetical overtones were present. In a meditation titled "The Waters That Flow By," his thought turns to time: "We see the water of a river flowing uninterruptedly and

[10] Kavelin, *Elder Macarius*. Chapters four and five are devoted to the publication of the patristic texts.

passing away, and all that floats on its surface, rubbish or beams of trees, all pass by. Christian! So does our life...." Completing the meditation, he notes several points that all Christians should embrace: 1) have a detached attitude toward life; 2) take no pride in passing honors; 3) do not fall into despondency; 4) suffer reproach and calumny gladly; and 5) bear life's troubles, for such acceptance brings peace and joy."[11]

The life and writings of St. Tikhon strongly suggest that he was an elder in thought and practice. But the term "elder" is not necessarily precise. Smolich notes its frequently polysemous nature and use in Russia.[12] My usage prefers to define an elder as a monastic (be it one who is cenobitic, or a skete dweller, or an anchorite) with strong elements of ascesis, mysticism, engagement in spiritual direction (guiding disciples and spiritual children), continuous prayer, humility, and even the periodic specific designation as elder granted or imposed by his monastic house.

Elders came from many backgrounds. The various *sosloviia* were well represented. Merchants, the military, the nobility, peasantry, townsmen, workers, and the clerical calling all made contributions. In embarking on the rigorous ascetic monastic path, which sometimes led them to eldership, the principal motivation was the attainment of rigorous spiritual goals. There were many impediments along the way, including those imposed by vicissitudes of character or circumstance. There were also obstacles that came via prescription by higher authorities. Elder Antonii had to leave his beloved Optina skete in 1839 to take on the abbacy of St. Nicholas Monastery in Maloiaroslavets. The nobly born Ignatii (Brianchaninov, 1807–1867), who had been the disciple of Elder Leonid and elders Feodor Svirskii and Kleopa Valaamskii (the latter two were direct disciples of Paisii) went through a bitter period of dejection in having been forced to become the hegumen of the St. Sergii Hermitage near St. Petersburg in 1834. His appointment resulted from the personal order of Nicholas I and Ignatii was to remain at this post until 1857. His spiritual discomfort is seen as he routinely

[11] Gorodetzky, *Saint Tikhon*; the translation is provided on pp. 72–74; the five points on p. 74.

[12] Smolich, *Russkoe Monashestvo*, 328. Smolich provides specific usages of the word "starets" (elder). Thus, a starets was periodically simply an older monk (who was not a hieromonk). There were "sobornye startsy" (council elders) who helped the superior run the monastery. And the word was applied even to the superiors themselves, among other examples.

petitioned to be freed from his appointment so he could devote his time to repentance and preparation for death.[13]

Repentance and death appear quite often in the writings of this remarkable ascetic; in fact, Ignatii was to write much on asceticism. His *Ascetical Experiences* (in six volumes) often address the issue of death. "My Lamentation," from the first volume, is a good example for many of his prevailing themes that appear here: the condition of fallen man, the transitory nature of the life of this world, love for the teachings of the Holy Fathers, repentance, remembrance of death, and the desire for solitude and stillness."[14] A highly educated person, Ignatii was passionate in the need to be inspired by the writings of the Holy Fathers. This is, as he states, to "study faith in the sources." He asks himself: "What was it that above all struck me in the works of the Fathers of the Orthodox Church? It was their harmony, their wondrous, magnificent harmony. Eighteen centuries, through their lips, testified to a single unanimous teaching, a Divine teaching!"[15] Ignatii proceeds to discuss how this teaching is never false, that this is the tradition that nourishes the Church.

The spiritual aims and trajectories of the elders were multiform but subsumed in the broad attributes of 19th-century monastic revival. Smolich unequivocally links this to elders (as the force coming from within monasticism itself) and the combination of asceticism and mysticism.[16] Elder Agapit (1838–1905) of Valaam, among many others, also believed that the essence of eldership was closely linked to monasticism. Spiritual work on one's passions was at the root of monastic aspiration after all.[17] Agapit's own

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[13] Monk Nicolas, "Works of St. Ignatius Brianchaninov," 5 (1 Cor. 15:26 states: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—N.L.).

[14] Monk Nicolas, "Works of St. Ignatius Brianchaninov," 7. "The Lamentation" appears on pp. 8–31 in the same issue of *Orthodox Word*. It is an interesting piece which opens with the words of St. Andrew of Crete: "What word shall I set at the beginning of my lament? What first thought from among my sorrowful thoughts shall I express in words?" There is a powerful mystical strand in Ignatii that is also expressed here: "My mind reverently gazes upon the judgments of God; it does not comprehend them. It does not dare to test them, but it sees and is amazed by them, and glorifies the incomprehensible, unfathomable God" (ibid. 11).

[15] Brianchaninov, "My Lamentation," 18.

[16] Smolich, *Russkoe Monashestvo,* 322–324.

[17] "Agapit," 275. Also, *Valaamskii Paterik*, "Skhimnik Agapit Slepets," 341–366.

eldership bore the Valaam tradition since Hegumen Nazarii's reintroduction of eldership in the 1780s and 1790s. He liked the strict ascetic rule there (derived from Sarov) as well as the austere Valaam chant. Blind for the last 23 years of his life, he accepted infirmity spiritually. "From my twenties afflictions came upon me—some for my sins, some to test me, and some for my preservation."[18] He was a fervent practitioner of the Jesus Prayer, which was strongly maintained there, and which had been taught to him by his own elder, Fr. Antipa (d. 1882). Agapit also consulted with Feofan the Recluse regarding the Jesus Prayer.

Agapit felt great anxiety when formal eldership was assigned to him. His intense humility and feelings of unworthiness made him fearful of taking on this obedience. He also wrote to Feofan concerning this and the scholar-mystic-ascetic replied: "Eldership is difficult by its very nature, but help from on high is always inherent to it, and it is essential to call upon this help. No word will remain fruitless, but the fruit will not appear right away. If you will, with love, say all that is fitting, you will have done your work." And a pointed reminder was added: "You say that you're not capable. It is not for you to judge this...."[19]

Valaam Monastery's recrudescence is ascribed to Hegumen Nazarii (1735–1809). He had entered the Sarov Monastery at age 17, was ordained hieromonk in 1776, and spent some years in seclusion. An ascetic from the very beginning, he was confirmed hegumen of Valaam in 1782. Valaam, despite its magnificent location on Lake Ladoga, was in horrendous disrepair. Nazarii, with the blessing and sometime participation of Metropolitan Gavriil of St. Petersburg, totally rebuilt the monastery, outwardly and inwardly. Gavriil insisted that the Sarov typikon be instituted minutely along with a strict order of church services. Nazarii introduced the three basic monastic forms at Valaam as well—the cenobitic, the anchoritic, and the skete dwelling.[20] In addition to monastic buildings, a number of sketes were also built. In his 20-year governance of Valaam, Nazarii quickly raised its prestige to a high level, even beyond Russia. It is reputed that even some Athonite monks came to Valaam.

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[18] "Agapit," 270.

[19] "Agapit," 282.

[20] *Little Russian Philokalia*, vol. 2, *Abbot Nazarius*, 20–22. The text uses Nazarius whereas I use the direct transliteration from the Russian, Nazarii.

The Sarov-Valaam connection is an interesting one. When Nazarii retired from his position as hegumen, he decided, in 1804, to return to Sarov, his original monastic home. He took with him Ilarion, who had been his secretary at Valaam. It is often stated that St. Serafim Sarovskii received *The Philokalia* from Nazarii.[21] After Nazarii's death in 1809, Elder Ilarion became the leading father confessor at Sarov. St. Serafim himself sent all people to Ilarion for confession. Ilarion was also involved with textual matters. He compiled a book of Elder Nazarii's counsels as well as some of his own spiritual instructions.[22] Presumably he headed the Sarov "scriptorium." Here monks worked on and copied patristic as well as new religious books. Ilarion died in 1841 leaving spiritual letters that bear the influence of Serafim.[23] The excellence and strictness of the Sarov Hermitage is extolled;[24] and a further example of how contact and interchange took place among the leading monasteries follows: "One of the Sarov abbots was blood brother to the Optina founders, Moses and Anthony, who themselves were close to Sarov; the former began his monastic life there and was guided in the practice of the Jesus Prayer by St. Seraphim himself. The latter was in close contact at Optina with Barlaam, formerly abbot of Valaam, a disciple of Blessed Nazarius."[25]

It is common in studies of Russian popular piety to advance the notion that the gulf between people and priest or monk, especially those with even a touch of recognized spirituality, was very small or non-existent.[26] These persons were living, approachable embodiments of a multiplicity of spiritual ideals and emotions. The elders fit this pattern far better than most. They were guides. They taught many things in clear fashion. "The prayers of the poor

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[21] *Little Russian Philokalia*, vol. 2, *Abbot Nazarius*, 24.

[22] An engraving of Nazarii shows him holding a scroll which reads: "Humility is firmness; and patience a rampart; while love is protection; and where there is love there is God; and where there is God—there is all goodness." This sounds like some of his counsels in tone. *Little Russian Philokalia*, vol. 2, *Abbot Nazarius*, 18. The "Counsels" of Elder Nazarii appear on pp. 41–81.

[23] As more work is done on Russian monasticism and eldership in the 19th century, one would hope that truly active and significant figures like Ilarion get scholarly attention. For the present, the great names of elders like Makarii, Amvrosii, and Serafim continue to receive overriding attention. Elder Iosif Optinskii (d. 1911) is another exceptional figure.

[24] E.g., in Smolich, *Russkoe Monashestvo,* 340–345.

[25] *Little Russian Philokalia*, vol. 2, *Abbot Nazarius*, 99. The names in this citation also should read: Moisei, Antonii, Serafim, Varlaam, and Nazarii.

[26] Pascal, *Religion of the Russian People*, 49.

are powerful," says Feofan. "You, too, go and multiply your alms; wipe the tears of the unfortunate, shelter if you can the destitute."[27] Feofan, in his great work, *The Path to Salvation,* tells people that they can do much on their own; they have the freedom to choose good. And if one is weak in struggling against the passions, he counsels "do not fail to lay your sorrows on the living God, Who says: *I am with you in an evil day—do not be afraid*" (italics mine).[28]

The multitudes of thousands who streamed to the doors of the elders' cells also spoke to the unusual circumstance that Russia's common people, and gradually even some of the intelligentsia, believed that the elders, too, were with them in an evil day—and they were not afraid. The behavior, attitude, and spiritual achievement of the elders warranted this belief in the popular mind. Elder Leonid, who, as we have seen, extended eldership into the external world so to speak, is an excellent example. He spoke simply, sometimes brusquely, always to the point, always understandably. As with other significant elders, clairvoyance was ascribed to him. The unending daily stream of people to his cell did not always sit well with eparchial or synodal authorities. What was a schema monk (a *skhimnik*) doing with all those people? (On the other hand, the Synod even had a hard time agreeing to the canonization of St. Serafim of Sarov in 1903). Leonid was moved several times in the last six years of his life because of "troubles" resulting from extensive contact with the people (in less sanguine analysis we confront the time honored practice here of the "donos" or denunciation). Drawing crowds of people was not limited to the luminaries. Even simple elders who sought ultimate seclusion, like Naum Solovetskii, were beset with visitors.[29]

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[27] Theophan, *Path to Salvation,* 145.

[28] Theophan, *Path to Salvation,* 282.

[29] *Solovetskii Paterik*, 161. Not only secular authorities could be petty and callous. Naum was a very simple man of great asceticism, labor, and dedication to Solovki. But he was twice sent from Solovki because of paperwork and administrative callousness. By 1834, he had resided there for 40 years. During the census of that year, according to the "Life," Naum's discharge papers from his village were not found, though they were in the monastery's possession somewhere. Not wishing to engage in correspondence on his account with government personnel, the Solovki authorities shipped Naum out on Holy Thursday. Fortunately for him, citizens and merchants of the town of Kem', where he had been shipped, obtained a formal release document for him and in two weeks' time they brought him back to his beloved monastery.

The well-known elders were also masters at giving practical advice. There are hundreds of examples of this in pronouncements, letters, and descriptive stories. Part of this ability might be ascribed to their flexibility. They spoke to the needs and sorrows of each individual. Their disciples and cell attendants noticed this periodically and might be generally told that the capacity of the person addressed to understand and partake had to be taken into account. Furthermore, many people came back regularly, especially the spiritual sons and daughters, and thus could be enlightened more systematically. The lessons were there in the Holy Fathers. St. Peter of Damascus, in *The Philokalia*, cites St. Gregory the Theologian who "observes what is said should be commensurate to the capacity of those to whom it is addressed."[30]

Perhaps as important as anything else was the elders' ability to reach into the heart and mind of the individual facing him. Disciples continually marveled that someone like Amvrosii or Makarii, in poor health, after seeing people non-stop for hours, would still exhibit a remarkable gentleness, a visage and language that consoled and gave hope, a capacity to instruct and care, and to be unwaveringly attentive. The people carried to him "only their sorrows and took away only gladness."[31] It is not remiss to suggest that seeing the world in a positive light, as many elders like Amvrosii always did, was imperative in maintaining such constancy of spiritual consolation. Elder Leonid was routinely described as constantly joyful.[32] The early Fathers had considered joy, and Peter of Damascus makes "Joy" one of his *Twenty Four Discourses*: "Through the things that bring him pleasure, he is made humble and grateful; through trials and temptations his hope in the world to come is consolidated; in both he rejoices, and naturally and spontaneously he *loves God and all men as his benefactors. He finds nothing in the whole of creation that can harm him*" (emphasis mine—N.L.).[33]

Even in the middle of an exhortation on the need for strict asceticism, there is room for gladness. "Open your spiritual eye to the contemplation of God and recognize the delightfulness of the Lord from the beauty of creation" writes Nikitas Stethatos; and, "To

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[30] *Philokalia: Complete Text*, 3: 265.

[31] Zyrianov, *Russkie monastyri*, 119. The quote is used in reference to Hieromonk Amfilokhii of the Rostov Spaso-Iakovlev Monastery. Though the author does not indicate the source of the quote, it is quite apt for elders in general.

[32] Sederholm, *Elder Leonid*, 103.

[33] *Philokalia: Complete Text*, 3: 261.

become a monk does not mean to abandon men and the world, to renounce the will of the flesh, to be destitute of the passions."[34] The elders, in their ministrations to their people, proved that they were not abandoning this world. Broadly viewed, "faith has to do with attitudes of trust, assurance, confidence, reliability, and loyalty to someone or something that we think is worthy and deserving of those sentiments" and "the power of faith blossoms in relationship, mutuality, reciprocity."[35] These attributes stood the elders in great stead. "In the presence of Elder Iosif," writes his biographer, "there was no room for boundless sorrow nor perpetual despair."[36]

The Elders and Humility

Humility is indisputably a tenet of Christianity. It was a precept, an article of faith that was suasively stressed in monasticism. St. Anthony pointed the way early when he wrote: "Come to love humility for it will cover all of your sins."[37] It was clear to the elders that humility had to be central to the spiritual struggle for the ineffable peace and the light sought was impossible without it. "When we are incapable of scaling the peaks of virtue," wrote Elder Makarii, "all we have to do is to descend into the ravine of humility. Our humility is our surest intercessor before the face of the Lord. It is by dint of humility and penance that the last shall be first. Therefore take courage."[38] Feofan the Recluse, replying to a letter from Elder Agapit of Valaam, wrote: "Remembrance of God, remembrance of death, a contrite and pained spirit falling before God; O Lord save me! O Lord, come to mine aid! This is the straight path."[39]

Elder Leonid cited St. Isaac the Syrian (one of the Fathers most quoted by Russian elders): "The assembly of the humble is beloved of God..."[40] And St. Isaac, in his *Directions on Spiritual Training*, had also said: "Fear of God is the beginning of virtue; it is

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[34] *Philokalia: Complete Text*, vol. 4, par. 74 and 76. The paragraphs here are part of Nikitas Stethatos, "On the Practice of the Virtues: One Hundred Texts," 98–99.

[35] Stylianopoulos, "Reflections on Faith," 3.

[36] Zyrianov, *Russkie monastyri*, 208 (who cites that biographer).

[37] *Dobrotoliubie*, 1: 110.

[38] Macarius, *Russian Letters*, 36. This was in a letter to one of his spiritual children but the idea was a constant element in his thought.

[39] "Agapit," 283.

[40] Sederholm, *Elder Leonid*, 53.

the offspring of faith and is sown in the heart..."[41] Further, St. Isaac was clear in stating that the divine mysteries would be revealed to the humble. St. Anthony had also addressed this centuries earlier. "The Lord did not say to us that our reward would be reaped here; rather here we will have temptation and pressure, needs and sorrows, and receive the rewards in the hereafter. This life is a road of temptation and struggle."[42]

Elder Amvrosii understood humility to be the basis for ascetic life and he asked: "How can you obtain humility in an undisturbed life?"[43] The many temptations in life were disturbances and only in the depths of humility could one hide from them, noted Elder Makarii.[44] One of the great temptations was the exercise of one's will that could not be done indiscriminately (and in certain contexts, not at all): "Only, as has been said, in all things we ought to renounce our own will so as to attain the goal God has set for us and pursue whatever He wishes. Unless we do this we can never be saved."[45] Abandonment of the will also meant sacrificing the right to one's own judgment (we will see an extension of this when discussing spiritual direction below).

An impediment to humility was the normal human tendency to self-love (*samougodie*), a state that Symeon the New Theologian had identified with turbulence.[46] Maximus the Confessor referred to self-love as "that mother of vices," which he linked to gluttony, avarice, and self-esteem."[47] Elder Antonii Optinskii was ceaselessly aware of the gravity of humility. While still a young man he had already written in his diary: "I saw that only when I think poorly of myself am I found to have a true opinion of myself, but when I think well of myself, then I fall into delusion."[48] That delusion stemming from self-love was a warning to elders when they saw it in their disciples and Elder Leonid, for example, was not particularly delicate with them on this issue, as his biographer tells us. Humility

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[41] *Early Fathers from the Philokalia*, 183.

[42] *Dobrotoliubie*, 1: 578.

[43] Chetverikov, *Elder Ambrose*, 220.

[44] Kavelin, *Elder Macarius*, 214.

[45] *Philokalia: Complete Text*, 3: 77.

[46] Symeon, *Discourses*, 22 (the reference is made by George Maloney, S.J. in the "Introduction").

[47] *Philokalia: Complete Text*, 2: 75. This appears in "Four Hundred Texts on Love" in the section titled "Second Century."

[48] Sederholm, *Elder Anthony*, 207.

could not be faked as the elders knew. Even good deeds without humility were minimized. Elder Makarii states: "Humility, even without works, brings forgiveness. But works without humility are quite useless."[49] Elder Antonii, who, incidentally, always read holy texts standing up, wrote: "Without humbling oneself in spirit one cannot be saved. Humility cannot be learned from mere words; it is necessary to practice it, and someone has to hammer us flat."[50]

Many other elements entered into the practice of humility. A monk should be a perfect novice even with full maturity. Spiritual attainment should not be flaunted. Elder Leonid is known to have never expected anything from anybody—a mark of humility. In conducting his voluminous correspondence, he did not even sign his letters singly; as a disciple of the Paisian elder Feodor, Leonid refused to countenance the possibility that anything could be truly done by oneself. His deflection from the self also projected into prayer, for was it not St. Basil the Great who said: "He who prays for others, prays for himself."[51]

Two specific terms widely used in ascription to elders need mention. *Smirenomudrie,* linking strong connotations of humility and wisdom is a rich concept that was distinctively applied to elders. *Umilenie* appears very often as well and is also best seen in the context of humility. Arseniev provides a highly applicable description: "At the heights of religious experience in the lives of saints, spiritual tenderness (*umilenie)* can attain a great degree of purity and humble, sober illumination; it can become a permanent state, a sort of deep background or constitutive element nourishing the whole spiritual life."[52]

The Elders and Asceticism

The pursuit of the ascetic ideal was quite universal among the elders. The varying elements of asceticism such as self-abnegation, fasting, withdrawal from the world, seclusion, among others, found great resonance in their lives. They were familiar with the early history of monasticism where asceticism originated and certainly

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[49] Macarius, *Russian Letters*, 102.

[50] Sederholm, *Elder Anthony*, 46. A number of elders who, like Antonii, only stood while reading holy texts, coupled with long hours at services, often wound up, as he did, with suppurating legs.

[51] Sederholm, *Elder Anthony*, 48.

[52] Arseniev, *Russian Piety*, 132.

were cognizant of the great stress placed on it by Paisii Velichkovskii and his disciples. It is safe to say that asceticism was also at the very basis of the spiritual guidance offered by the elders.

There is much commentary on and exhortation to asceticism in *The Philokalia* and personal ascesis is certainly a desired norm and standard.[53] Mark the Ascetic clearly linked asceticism to adversity, a natural sequence. "Do not claim to have acquired virtue unless you have suffered affliction, for without affliction virtue has not been tested."[54] Elder Amvrosii felt that testing was beneficial and unavoidable; affliction, temptation, pain, discipline—all built the novice spiritually. Elder Ignatii (Brianchaninov) stresses this as well: "For attributes of the Gospel to be made stronger and more mature in a monk, afflictions and trials are absolutely necessary. His meekness must be tried; his faith and patience must be tested."[55] Without such trials and afflictions, a monk would be poorly armed for the continuum of internal spiritual battles.

With their great sense of measure, the Optina elders generally decried excessive asceticism as did, perhaps surprisingly, St. Serafim of Sarov who cautioned not to undertake ascetic labors beyond one's capacity.[56]So did Paisii who taught: "If you cannot labor as the Holy Fathers did, then at least begin according to your strength."[57] Individuals could take pride in their ascetic feats. Or, asceticism might be taken up from despondency and depression. Or people just wished to run away from themselves.[58] The Optina elders frequently warned against despondency and despair, which can occur, as Mark the Ascetic had noted long before, even from wounded self-love. Elder Amvrosii "persuaded those who sought his advice that they must never, under any circumstances of life or unpleasantness, be depressed, but they must always hope in God's Providence."[59] Elder Antonii, who became dejected when forced to accept an abbacy, received a

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[53] *Philokalia: Complete Text*, 3: 71. The reference here is interesting because Peter of Damascus, who is cited, says little about other serious matters like the liturgy, communal aspects of monasticism, or visitors. He consistently stresses personal asceticism and prayer.

[54] *Philokalia: Complete Text*, 1: 114.

[55] Brianchaninov, "My Lamentation," 24.

[56] *Little Russian Philokalia*, vol. 1, *St. Seraphim*, 51.

[57] *Little Russian Philokalia*, vol. 4, *St. Paisius Velichkovsky*, 65.

[58] This interesting suggestion comes from a scholar of mysticism. Fanning, *Mystics of the Christian Tradition*, 66.

[59] Chetverikov, *Elder Ambrose*, 157.

letter from his brother, the Elder Moisei, which read: "spiritual dejection is unavoidable; only patience and prayer can overcome it."[60] Antonii liked to quote St. Isaac the Syrian, who taught Christians to treat despondent people as infirm, to comfort them, and not engage in accusation. Interestingly, the elders generally also favored the view that asceticism was open to all, not just monks, a point that Feofan routinely supported and advanced.

A word is in order regarding hesychasm (stillness, repose) and the Jesus Prayer, which, in its longest form, reads: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner." The practice and theories of this prayer have a long history. We know many of the aims, the spiritual benefits, the methods of teaching it, the uses and misuses, the efficacy ascribed to it, and the danger. It is important to realize, however, as our monk of the Eastern Church points out, that the two elements of hesychasm and asceticism are not coeval.[61] There are great links for as he points out, the history of the Jesus Prayer in the 19th century is interwoven with the *Dobrotoliubie* (the *Philokalia*, itself clearly linked to asceticism).

The invocation of the Jesus Prayer is a monologic exercise. The underlying conviction is that the repetition of Christ's name in a continuous or semi-continuous manner helps to lead one's thoughts to the divine. This spiritual labor helps to cleanse and elevate one's internal state, and once adept at the prayer, through proper training by an elder or other religious figure, a mystical interconnection can be attained. The Jesus Prayer is recited or mentally articulated by its practitioners throughout the day, frequently even in the midst of other activity and engagement. Thus, the mind and the heart can undergo a transmutation to the subliminal and the Jesus Prayer stays with the person who has perfected it permanently. One did not have to attend the liturgy or vespers to partake of it. "The Jesus Prayer is a book to be opened...."[62] states the Monk (Lev Gillet), but the pages cannot be turned in an article that is not devoted strictly to the prayer. A large proportion of elders practiced the Jesus Prayer in some form and frequency, though specific dissection of who and how could prove anarchic.

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[60] Sederholm, *Elder Anthony*, 79.

[61] A Monk of the Eastern Church, *Jesus Prayer,* 74–76.

[62] A Monk of the Eastern Church, *Jesus Prayer,* 78.

The Elders and Spiritual Direction

In one of his letters, Elder Makarii wrote that prayers without moral improvement were useless.[63] That moral improvement, or at least the path toward it, could be attained with the help of spiritual direction, a spiritual father. Some elders, like Nektarii of Optina, tested the hearts of those who came to them "and did not so much console them as point out a path of struggle."[64] Prayer may, perhaps, be an obvious area for spiritual direction. But for the monks, and especially the elders' disciples, there was much more. A disciple had to undertake total obedience to his elder. Obedience made up a very important component of spiritual direction.

It should be noted that obedience was most often seen to be total and unreserved, for otherwise humility could not be achieved. The future elder, Feodor Svirskii, who was to become a disciple of Paisii and was present at his deathbed, entered the Ploshchansk Hermitage in his youth. The hermitage was under the direction of Elder Serapion and there "he entered the arena of monastic obedience in order to gain inward freedom by outward slavery, to earn inner nobility of spirit by external abasement."[65]

The disciple or novice would have to confess with contrition rather than complexity, something that elders like Nektarii tended to stress.[66] Thoughts and words, not just deeds, were scrutinized. There is a specific edge to this because many of the famous elders required their disciples to confess their thoughts daily (*otkrovenie pomyslov*). Formal confession, when it occurred, thus took on an added dimension. And the elders were the teachers of asceticism, humility, mystical components (where applicable and if they had that inclination), and daily spiritual comportment.

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[63] Macarius, *Russian Letters*, 55.

[64] Kontzevich, *Elder Nektary*, 163.

[65] Sederholm, *Elder Leonid*, 212. Elder Antonii, who was extremely conscientious regarding obedience, provides an interesting entry in his diary for 1 December 1823. "Out of self-will, I made a prayer rope out of string without the blessing of the Elder and, seeing my mistake, I threw it into the stove as a demonic work. A thought said to me at the time: although you began a good deed by your own will, without the counsel and blessing of the Elder, consider it all a demonic activity."Sederholm, *Elder Anthony*, 208.

[66] Kontzevich, *Elder Nektary*, 172.

One of the great founders of monasticism, St. Basil the Great, considered spiritual direction to be the foundation of monastic asceticism as well as the elder-disciple relationship. The latter was seen as beneficial for the elder and the disciple both. If willing and able to undertake the rigorous mental and physical journey, the disciple would, at some point, begin to absorb the extensive spiritual discernment and grace of his elder. Elders themselves made sure they had their own spiritual fathers (elders) for they always predicated their behavior on their own need for spiritual direction as well. Elder Amvrosii, often cited as the greatest of the elders, always had one. At Valaam, every monk was required to have his own elder (not a routine practice).

This tradition of spiritual direction and obedience was keenly and resolutely sustained by a pleiad of Church Fathers. Peter of Damascus continually emphasizes the need for spiritual direction. Symeon the New Theologian implores for it. His disciple and biographer, Nikitas Stethatos, does the same, as does John Climacus. And, of course, so do Barsanuphius and John (sixth century). Jaroslav Pelikan observes: "Unquestioning loyalty to the fathers was a continuing characteristic of Eastern thought."[67] This is certainly applicable here.

Spiritual direction was extraordinarily broad in its scope. The elders were entrusted with it for their disciples. They engaged in it with the multitudes of people who came to their door. They wrote letters by the score that, as in the case of the six volumes of Makarii's extant letters, provide unparalleled entry into their thought. They taught, cajoled, exhorted, pleaded, and set their own trusted example. And they unceasingly used the early Fathers as guides.

Mark the Ascetic wrote: "Failure to do good that is within your power is hard to forgive. But mercy and prayer reclaim the negligent."[68] Maximus the Confessor: "Do not befoul your intellect by clinging to thoughts filled with anger and sensual desire. Otherwise you will lose your capacity for pure prayer and fall victim to the demon of listlessness."[69] Maximus was widely cited by the elders for he touched on many concerns: "He who believes fears; he who fears is humble; he who is humble becomes gentle and renders inactive those impulses of insensitivity and desire which are contrary to nature. A person who is gentle keeps the commandments;

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[67] Pelikan, *Spirit of Eastern Christendom*, 9.

[68] *Philokalia: Complete Text*, 1: 114.

[69] *Philokalia: Complete Text*, 2: 57–58.

he who keeps the commandments is purified; he who is purified is illumined; he who is illumined is made a consort of the divine Bridegroom and Logos in the shrine of mysteries."[70] This epigrammatic staccato style made it simpler for elders to compress their thoughts and ideas for they could not possibly enter into detailed discussion with the thousands who came to them. St. Isaac the Syrian was quoted even more often because of his famous and paradigmatic treatise, "Directions on Spiritual Training," a sophisticated and detailed study. The letters and commentaries of the elders utilize and reference such works extensively.

As in our prior themes, and so in questions of spiritual direction, the elders hold to no single method, intellectual and theological disposition, or emotional tone. Their flexibility is profound and generous. Whether the words of edification are simple or complex, they are colored by the personal charisma of each elder.[71] Being outside the mainstream of organized religion anyway, the power of personal style and emphasis frequently could make the difference as to whether the heart and mind of a supplicant was reached. This is difficult, nay impossible, to quantify. But an interesting question should be asked: without the spiritual charisma we know so many elders possessed, how many people would have gathered at their cells? Would eldership itself have undergone its remarkable efflorescence?

Remarks

In the context of an article, a complete summation of the history and impact of elders in Russia is unworkable. But some elements, perhaps we can call them reference points, must be undertaken. "It is not accidental that no institutional structure emerged around the function of elders in the monasteries where they lived, for the elder's authority was always personal, non-institutional."[72] Leonard Stanton states this important truism. The administratively cumbrous Church had difficulty understanding this. The philosopher Mikhail A. Novoselov, whose own path took him from Tolstoyanism to Orthodoxy to the founding of the Religiozno-filosofskaia biblioteka series in 1902, believed only in the authority

[70] *Philokalia: Complete Text*, 2: 117.

[71] Dunlop, *Staretz Amvrosy*, 20, uses the term "the charisma of spiritual direction." I am sure this notion of charisma in this context has ancient roots.

[72] Stanton, *Optina Pustyn Monastery*, 44.

of the elders. "He had no use for the bishops whom he viewed as bureaucrats of synodal rule, groveling to the government."[73] This was not exactly a unique position. "Truly," writes Sergei Firsov, "the hierarchy was crushed by secular power, but strangely, it was often charmed by it and attempted to copy the manner of the grandees."[74] It was not uncommon to assert that the "unconditional adherence to Orthodox tradition was supplanted by forcibly imposed ecclesiastical conventionalism which, in turn, engendered protest and repulsed the most educated segment of society from the church."[75]

Support or understanding of the elders' work was hardly forthcoming from these quarters. The list of aggravations, petty administrative incursions, provocations, and disciplinary measures is shamefully long. These ranged from accusations of excessive fraternization (what is a schema monk constantly doing in a crowd of people?), lack of proper clericalism, unease with elders being outside the system, or a myriad of other allegations. In the pre-war years of the 20th century, eldership was being pressured by the Holy Synod (Stanton uses the term "under attack"). A 1911 commission headed by the acquiescent Bishop Serafim was sent to inspect Optina. The commission, having unceremoniously transferred Elder Varsanofii to the distant Golutvin Monastery, then raised the issue of possibly abolishing eldership altogether.[76] This has a bizarre ring to it, though Optina's popularity and uniqueness made its position tenuous in the eyes of official ecclesiastical bodies.

Stanton is very forceful in stating that "Makarii and the other Optina elders were figures who never fit well into any institutional niches. Their spirituality caused nervousness in the Church's monastic hierarchy.... They were looked upon with deep suspicion by many members of the married parish clergy."[77] The frequently raised question of how much moral authority was left in the Church in the turbulent pre-revolutionary years devolves partly on matters like this, where even the purest exemplars of the spiritual life, who

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[73] Novoselov, *Pis'ma*, xxx.

[74] Firsov, 76. Discussion of this apprehension continues to p. 85.

[75] Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Akademiia, 51.

[76] For a good discussion of this, see Stanton, *The Optina Pustyn Monastery*, 69.

[77] Stanton, *Optina Pustyn Monastery*, 141.

were able to touch thousands of people, were mistrusted. It is almost as if church officialdom was looking at elders as holy fools.[78]

Also in 1911, in contrast to the commission sent to investigate Optina Pustyn', a meeting of various monastic representatives took place at the Troitse-Sergieva Lavra. It was resolved there that "the most important task of monasteries was the preservation of eldership. This included attention to the spiritual welfare of monks-novices and loyalty to the ancient ascetical traditions."[79] Smolich preceded this observation by noting that the meaning of eldership for monasteries and interest in ascetical writings led to an increase of study in these subjects. "*Even in the Moscow Theological Academy*," he states, "some students were choosing eldership and its history as dissertation topics"[80] (italics mine). Competing perspectives led to competing tensions.

Curiously, there was considerable dissatisfaction with eldership even within monastic establishments and efforts to curb it were not uncommon. Hegumen Innokentii of Valaam Monastery (confirmed in that position after Nazarii) mistrusted the elders, and Feodor and Kleopa, disciples of Paisii himself, did not meet with much welcome there. Innokentii found it difficult to comprehend the spiritual freedom of the elders even though he was familiar with *The Philokalia*. His position changed very gradually.[81] Before the change occurred, however, he had filed a complaint with the eparchial hierarch, Metropolitan Amvrosii, who then conducted an investigation of the elders (they were exonerated). A later Valaam hegumen, Varlaam, who himself became a notable elder, was "perplexed at how these Elders, who spent whole days talking and giving spiritual counsel, remained undisturbed."[82] And the several persecutions of Elder Leonid are notorious. Even the saintly Elder

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[78] Ewa Thompson, I believe, is accurate in her portrayal of 19th-century holy fools with their eccentricities, aggressiveness, and paranormalcy, noting that they were increasingly subject to mockery. I also agree with her judgment that historically the vast majority of Russian holy fools "had little to do with Christian sainthood." Thompson, *Understanding Russia*, x. For her general discussion of holy fools, see especially the first section of the book.

[79] Smolich, *Russkoe Monashestvo,* 365.

[80] Smolich, *Russkoe Monashestvo,* 365.

[81] "Innocent," 204.

[82] "Varlaam," 296.

Amvrosii did not escape suspicion and indignity at the hands of the authorities.[83]

The failure in varying degrees to understand the inner life of struggle and the capacity of the elders to then project the spiritual benefits there from derived were fairly prevalent. This certainly did not apply to those for whom the elders were a living symbol of true spirituality. These were the people who came to the elders' cells, who dropped to their knees en masse when an elder appeared, who made the funerals of elders veritable feasts of faith.[84] This did not apply to those who were totally comfortable with the elders' unique, personal ways of reaching them. Even in confession, one did not have to go by the book and no one felt traumatized as a result.[85] And the elders were intimately humanized in their names —Anatolii the Comforter, Feodosii the Wise, and Wondrous Nektarii.[86] Perhaps it was the humanizing factor that led Voloshin to write his substantial poem about Serafim of Sarov in the heat of the Civil War. The poet traces the whole life and spiritual labor of the saint.[87]

There is much work on the elders that needs to be done. One area that should prove fruitful would be a detailed look at their concern for the growth and well-being of convents, women's spiritual communities, and spiritual daughters. Almost every major elder not only spoke of this but acted on it in some way. Amvrosii was known to have been especially mindful of this because he felt women in general were seriously disadvantaged. The place of elders in monasticism needs more extensive elucidation. A recent book on monasticism attempts this, but does it sketchily since this is only one issue of many treated.[88] The question of how the elders looked

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[83] The bishop of Kaluga, Vitalii, was sent to Shamordino Convent where Amvrosii was deemed to have stayed too long (despite the fact of severe illness). Vitalii's injunction was to forcibly return Amvrosii to Optina. But he arrived just in time for Amvrosii's funeral. This pathetic story is excellently told in Chetverikov's biography of Amvrosii, ch. 10.

[84] I borrow this phrase from the description of Makarii's funeral, which was described as a "feast of faith." Kavelin, *Elder Macarius*, 197.

[85] There is an entertaining description by a Muscovite, V. V. Yasherov, of how unusual his confession to Elder Amvrosii was. Chetverikov, *Elder Ambrose*, 280–289.

[86] The text cites the name in Anglicized form. Kontzevich, *Elder Nektary*, 94.

[87] Boris Sosnovskii's analysis of this poem can be seen in *Russkaia Mysl'*, no. 4408–9, and no. 4410 (2002).

[88] Zyrianov, *Russkie monastyri*.

upon the growing issues connected with social outreach in the political framework needs a survey. This could be linked to an even larger issue: the overarching question of just how much impact they had on society's mores, ideas, religious outlook, and political agendas. In the context of the prevailing assumptions regarding the failure of the Russian Church to provide a genuine and resolute counterweight to the ideological currents of the time, this is a meritorious question. Of course, the very fact that, by definition, a group of elders could not be numerically large needs always to be kept in the foreground. From that perspective, their influence exceeded the most optimistic assessment. Finally, scholarly studies of many individual elders, especially of the lesser known, would be very beneficial.

A viewpoint such as the following by Stanton generally finds a strong measure of approval: "No matter how badly the Synod and the parish clergy might botch the work of saving souls on earth, the Church as a whole could not fail, for it was still home to the elders; and of their intimate spiritual communion with the Holy Spirit there could be no doubt."[89] It is fair to say that interpretations of the lives and work of the elders are fundamentally favorable. Their uniqueness and individuality stand out, and their efficacy in reaching people and answering their spiritual needs is not really open to challenge. So they occupy a hallowed position (especially when contrasted with the hierarchical and institutional structure), which is all the more ascertainable given the mixed (or perhaps often negative) assessments of the Church as a whole in this time frame. Clearly, the long overdue re-evaluation of Russian Church history in the 19th century must take place and, in fact, is well under way. Many American scholars of Russian religion and the church are in the forefront here. The correctives that are appearing regarding the institutional church are not negating the role of the elders. The ultimate experience of spirituality is individual, and therein lies the elders' paramount fullness and strength.

[89] Stanton, *Optina Pustyn Monastery,* 44.

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RUSSIAN ORTHODOXY AND WOMEN'S SPIRITUALITY IN IMPERIAL RUSSIA*

Christine D. Worobec

On 8 November 1885, the feast day of Archangel Michael, the Abbess Taisiia had a mystical experience in the midst of a church service dedicated to the tonsuring of sisters at Leushino. The women's religious community of Leushino had recently been elevated to the status of a monastery.[1] Conducting an all-women's choir on that special day, the abbess became exhilarated by the beautiful refrain of the Cherubikon hymn, "Let us lay aside all earthly cares," and envisioned Christ surrounded by angels above the iconostasis. She later wrote, "Something was happening, but what it was I am unable to tell, although I saw and heard everything. It was not something of this world. From the beginning of the vision, I seemed to fall into ecstatic rapture. . . . Tears were streaming down my face. I realized that everyone was looking at me in astonishment, and even fear...."[2] Five years later, a newspaper columnist witnessed a scene in a church in the Smolensk village of Egor'-Bunakovo in which a woman began to scream in the midst of the singing of the Cherubikon. He described "a horrible in-

*This book chapter is dedicated to the memory of Brenda Meehan, who pioneered the study of Russian Orthodox women religious in the modern period.

[1] The Russian language does not have a separate word such as "convent" or nunnery" to distinguish women's from men's monastic institutions.

[2] *Abbess Thaisia*, 194; quoted in Meehan, *Holy Women of Russia*, 126.

Tapestry of Russian Christianity: Studies in History and Culture. Nickolas Lupinin, Donald Ostrowski and Jennifer B. Spock, eds. Columbus, Ohio: Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures and the Resource Center for Medieval Slavic Studies, The Ohio State University, 2016, 355–388.

human shout" that crescendoed into five minutes of screaming before the woman fell down exhausted and sobbing. Several observers fled the church, others fainted, and still others clustered around the afflicted woman.[3] While the Abbess Taisiia had a religious experience of deep faith, the Smolensk peasant woman believed herself to be possessed by demons. In the midst of sacred space and time marked by not only the holy liturgy but also the singing of the Cherubikon, both women had otherworldly experiences.

Joining communicants on earth to angels around the heavenly throne, the Cherubikon celebrates a dramatic moment of the liturgy, the so-called Great Entrance. At this point the officiating cleric carries the communion cup and the deacon the tray with unconsecrated bread from the Prothesis chapel to the high altar. Accordingly, the hymn announces: "We, who in a mystery represent the Cherubim and sing the thrice holy hymn to the life-giving Trinity, let us now lay aside all earthly cares, for we are about to receive the King of all, invisibly escorted by the angelic hosts. Allelouia, allelouia, allelouia."[4] To prepare for the mysteries of the Eucharist, the officiating priest has already dismissed the unbaptized or catechumens, but he must be sure that the congregation is full of only worthy Christians. The Cherubikon is thus accompanied by the priest's inaudible exhortation against the unworthiness of "those who are bound by carnal desires and pleasures."[5] It is at this point that the fits of *klikushi* or shriekers in the 19th century began as the celebration of Christ's Resurrection and of the triumph of good over evil was believed to provoke the fear of the demons inhabiting their bodies. The demoniacs hissed, meowed, howled, cawed, and made other animal noises. They swore, blasphemed, convulsed uncontrollably, and tore at their hair and clothing. With the encouragement of witnesses who became players in the ritual drama of possession, they sometimes shrieked out the name of the individual they thought had bewitched them and had planted the demons inside their bodies. Only the intercession of a saint or the Mother of God or, less frequently, an

[3] *Smolenskii vestnik*, 12 October 1890, 3.

[4] Modification of translation in Perry et al., *Blackwell Dictionary*, 117.

[5] Translated in Maughan, *Liturgy of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, 53; Ware, *Orthodox Church*, 286–289; and Worobec, *Possessed*, 74. The dismissal of the unbaptized is a holdover from the liturgy of the ancient church.

exorcism (usually involving the intoning of prayers) could expunge the demons and restore the women's bodies and spirit to God. The same hymn obviously could invoke other sentiments as well: Mother Taisiia's ecstatic experience came in anticipation of the mysterious consecration of the bread and wine and a vision of Christ himself.

These two late 19th-century scenes in the midst of the holy liturgy reveal aspects of Orthodox women's spirituality at a time when Orthodoxy found itself infused with new vitality and women were at the forefront of the religious awakening. In response to Catherine II's 1764 secularization of monastic lands and closure of significant numbers of monasteries, the remaining monastic institutions turned inward and reexamined their spiritual functions. One consequence of that reappraisal was the revival of hesychasm, a "mystical tradition based on monological prayer," such as the Jesus Prayer, and its fundamental component of spiritual eldership.[6] The revival culminated in the second half of the 19th century with the rise of hermitages and monasteries as centers of spiritual advice to the laity as well as clergy, scholarship, and asceticism. While the Optina Hermitage, the most famous of these sacred establishments, attracted people of all estates from commoners to the wealthy and the great intellectuals of Russia's golden age of literature, including Fedor Dostoevsky and Leo Tolstoy, scores of official and unofficial non-hesychast religious institutions were being established throughout European Russia. Over seventy-five percent of the official institutions were women's religious communities. Furthermore, pilgrimages to saints' shrines, monasteries, and sites of miracle-working icons increased dramatically in response, in part, to the newer transportation systems of the railroad and steamship and, in part, to the Orthodox Church's embrace of mass communications that announced to a growing literate public the attractions of holy sites. Among the ever-growing number of pilgrims, women once again predominated.

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[6] In the Eastern Orthodox Church the Athonite monk Gregory Palamas (1296–1359) was a leading exponent of the hesychast movement. It enjoyed a Slavic revival beginning in the late 18th century with the dissemination of Paisii Velichkovskii's version of the *Philokalia*, a "collection of mystical and ascetic texts" (Perry et al., *Blackwell Dictionary*, 230–231). While spiritual elders traditionally limited their guidance to monks, the modern variant of spiritual eldership broadened its audience to include the laity (Kenworthy, *Heart of Russia*, ch. 6; and Paert, *Spiritual Elders*).

The high visibility of women in 19th-century Russian Orthodox institutions, both formal and informal, was part of a broader pattern of increased women's roles in Western European and American Catholicism and Protestantism. Indeed, with regard to women's growing presence in religion in the West, historians refer to a "feminization of religion." By that phrase they mean the "growing preponderance of women in congregations; the power that this preponderance gave women over religious life; and a 'softening' of theology and religious symbolism that followed as a consequence."[7] This definition is problematic for the Russian case. The second characteristic in the "feminization of religion" may in fact be unique to Protestantism since neither the hierarchical Catholic nor Russian Orthodox churches permitted women to gain authority over religious life. Indeed, both Catholic and Russian Orthodox churches found women's preaching to be anathema. In the case of the third characteristic of feminization of religion—"a 'softening' of theology and religious symbolism"—the softening had already occurred within Russian Orthodoxy in the Muscovite period. At this point, the scholarship on Russian women's roles in Orthodoxy and congregational life is not well enough developed to argue for a feminization of religion in late Imperial Russia. Until all aspects of women's spirituality and men's piety in prerevolutionary Russia are systematically studied, we have to limit our claims to assert that women's spirituality was a significant element within the Orthodox awakening and that a feminization of monasticism did take place.[8]

Getting at the heart of women's spirituality at all levels of Russian society in the 19th century is extremely difficult, given the paucity of sources that privilege women. What the average woman of individual estates thought about God, Mary 'the Birthgiver of God' (*Bogoroditsa*) or Mother of God, Christ, the saints, salvation,

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[7] Pope, "Immaculate and Powerful," 193.

[8] For discussions of the feminization of Russian Orthodox monasticism see Miller, "Under the Protection"; and Wagner, "Paradoxes of Piety," 212. Nadieszda Kizenko in her superb discussion of two popular cults of holy persons—Ksenia Peterburgskaia and Father Ioann Kronshtadtskii—in Imperial Russia, both of whom were associated with women, suggests that feminization of religion in general was occurring in Imperial Russia. More micro-studies of this type as well as broader comparative studies of women's and men's piety will be necessary to test this claim. See Kizenko, "Protectors of Women," 105–124.

and the role that the church played in her life is difficult to ascertain. The historian has to tease information out of a limited number of autobiographies and biographies, obituaries, sensational stories in the press, and numerous formulaic miracle tales. The two stories presented at the outset of the chapter, the one from the autobiography of the Abbess Taisiia and the other from a newspaper report on the bizarre story of a peasant woman who believed herself to be possessed by demons, provide a lens onto the issue of women's spirituality. On the surface these two stories seem to be diametrically opposed. A closer look, however, reveals a number of overlaps and similarities that suggest some rudimentary characteristics of women's religiosity. The two narratives also provide a framework for exploring other women's religious experiences.

Before we return to those stories, however, we need to examine in a general fashion the attractions that Russian Orthodoxy held for women. On the one hand, the church's male hierarchical structure and didactic literature denouncing women as prone to a variety of sins such as fornicating, gossiping, upholding superstitious beliefs, and committing evil in general could not have been appealing to women in the pre-modern and modern eras.[9] The prohibition against women entering the sanctuary behind the iconostasis or icon wall reflects patriarchal notions of woman's sexuality, her connection to Eve as well as her bodily pollution or impurity. Exception to this rule was made only in the case of nuns, who out of necessity had to be in the sanctuary to assist a visiting priest in serving the liturgy at women's monasteries or to clean the holy space. A menstruating woman, according to Orthodox practice, could not enter a church or other sacred space or partake of communion. Furthermore, canon law considered a brand new mother to be among the excommunicants: she had to abstain from participation in ecclesiastical rites for 40 days and undergo ritual purification before she was allowed to attend religious services and take communion.[10]

Those same taboos with regard to women's sexuality and the concern about men as weaklings when confronted with sexual temptation were expressed in the medieval Orthodox monastic prohibitions against women. Women were not allowed in monks'

[9] For examples of negative pre-Petrine church writings about women, see Levin, *Sex and Society*, 52–53, 54–55, 56.

[10] Levin, *Sex and Society*, 169–72; and Levin, "Childbirth," 47–49.

cells and from the 1420s onward could not confess their sins to abbots and monks, although they could receive counseling from these men in specially designated visitors' rooms, where presumably more than one cleric was in attendance.[11] Women who visited saints' shrines at monasteries were also denied liturgical assistance. Thus, women who experienced miracle cures after having prostrated their bodies on saints' tombs did not receive the mediation that monks provided to men in the same circumstances. In fact, the monks were conspicuously absent from these holy places when women were present. While such strictures may not have always been enforced and most were lifted in the modern period, the designation of certain areas within monastic institutions as being off limits to women continued to reflect the church's wariness of women's sexuality. Paradoxically, the absence of monks from holy tombs in the medieval period empowered women to enjoy a more intimate and personal relationship with saints because women were able to access these holy persons through their prayers and nocturnal visions without the mediation of monks. The saints' tactile responses in medieval miracle stories to their supplicants' entreaties for help against disease, infertility, or abusive relationships—by touching them on their heads and faces, wiping their faces with their mantles, or taking them by the hand—suggest that medieval women had already created for themselves a kinder, gentler Orthodoxy.[12]

While women in the 19th century continued to have personal visitations of saints and the Mother of God at night or on the road to holy shrines, women's ability to participate in liturgies and memorial services at saints' graves located within monastery walls assured the greater dependence of women worshipers on monks' intercession with God, Christ, Mary, and saints. Any encounters women had with the divine on their own lost their subversive character because of the modern standardization of ritual for all worshipers regardless of gender. Each recipient of a vision, whether female or male, was obliged to make and fulfil a vow to travel to the particular saint's grave to thank the saint and participate in the ecclesial community by having prayers and a memorial service said by an officiating cleric.[13]

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[11] Levin, *Sex and Society*, 281; and Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 149.

[12] Thyrêt, "Muscovite Miracle Stories," 124–125; and Thyrêt, "Women and the Orthodox Faith," 169. See also Spock, "Solovki Monastery," 406, 394.

[13] The notion of the subversive nature of visions comes from Christian, *Visionaries*, 8.

At the same time that the Russian Orthodox ecclesiastical hierarchy held a condescending attitude towards women, however, it was also "concerned with the salvation of all its members" and "could not afford to treat women as innately weak vessels."[14] Consequently, it championed examples of good women who were either divine themselves or capable of interceding with the divine. Chief among these models was that of Mary.

The cult of the Mother of God was and continues to be central to Russian Orthodoxy. Icons dedicated to Mary, many of which are believed to be miracle-working, were ubiquitous throughout Orthodox Russia in the medieval and modern periods and the range of her iconographic images, with or without the Christ child, immense. In fact, there are "well over two hundred different types" of icons of the Birth-giver of God or Theotokos,[15] although these depictions are not representations of "separate Marys." Venerated above the saints in Russian Orthodoxy, the Mother of God intercedes with God on behalf of mankind because of "her having shared those life experiences . . . familiar to common believers." That stress on Mary's "common humanity," according to Vera Shevzov, separates 19th-century Orthodoxy from Roman Catholicism and its 1865 adoption of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception.[16] In Orthodoxy, Mary's infinite mercy promises mere mortals the possibility of achieving God's grace through miracles and redemption.

Mary's intercessory role beckoned women in Orthodox Russia to identify with her in both the medieval and imperial periods and quite possibly provided "an inspiration for female action within the patriarchies of faith and society."[17] According to Liudmila Semenova Gerasimova's petition to the 1917–1918 National Church Council, "Woman is cast by human fate as the Holy Virgin severing the head of the serpent, the intermediary between God and people, and as a moral force."[18] Like the Mother of God,

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[14] Thyrêt, *Between God and Tsar*, 15.

[15] Coomler, *Icon Handbook*, 203.

[16] Shevzov, *Russian Orthodoxy*, 225, 219. Russian Orthodox theologians referred to Mary as the Virgin, but, unlike their Western counterparts, emphasized the spiritual nature of her virginity.

[17] Marker, "God of Our Mothers," 205; and Thyrêt, "Women and the Orthodox Faith," 173.

[18] See Gerasimova's "To the All-Russian Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church," translated by William G. Wagner, in Bisha, *Russian Women*, 284.

women of the upper classes could intercede with the divine on behalf of those less fortunate. At the same time, women of all estates could identify with Mary in her various earthly roles as orphan, virgin, mother, widow, needleworker, and exile.[19] Prayers to the Mother of God could touch upon one or more of these roles as women sought relief from labor pains, poverty, and the tribulations of widowhood. They also sought Mary's aid in healing their own, their children's, their husbands' and other relatives' physical and spiritual ailments. For example, the Korsun icon of the Mother of God was particularly revered by barren women and those with ailing children, the Tikhvin Marian icon by those with sick children, and the icon of the Mother of God of the Never-Draining Cup (from 1878 onward) by those with alcoholic relatives.[20] Finally, women whose visions or miraculous cures resulted in the special veneration of a Marian icon not only shared their experiences with the larger community of believers, but also enjoyed special recognition by ecclesiastical authorities.[21]

Like the Mother of God, officially and unofficially recognized Byzantine and Russian women saints, although smaller in number than male saints, provided women in both medieval and modern Russia with role models.[22] Here were independent women who defended the faith, acted as domestic caretakers of their families

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[19] Shevzov, *Russian Orthodoxy*, 221–222.

[20] Shevzov, *Russian Orthodoxy*, 234, 324n105; and Weichert, "De-Toxing the Nation," 24–25.

[21] For an example, see Shevzov, *Russian Orthodoxy*, 238.

[22] Due to the fact that a regular canonization procedure did not exist in Muscovite Russia, it is difficult to estimate the actual number of Russian women saints in the period before Peter the Great (1682–1725). Church publications of the 19th century, including Archimandrite Ignatii's (Malyshev) two-volume 1875 compendium of Russian saints (*Zhitiia sviatykh*), list only 16 women among more than 387 saints (less than 4.1 percent). Such a low number led subsequent church historians "such as E. Golubinskii and George Fedotov" to conclude that "Muscovite Russia did not encourage the concept of holy women." (Thyrêt, "Women and the Orthodox Faith," 162.) Yet, according to Eve Levin, the Russian calendar of the 14th and 15th centuries mentioned a total of 239 women saints. Clearly not all of these women were Russian but the larger number of women as well as Isolde Thyrêt's investigations into the definition of the sanctity of medieval Russian women suggest a far richer representation of women among the divine that must have influenced women at the time and continued to influence them in the modern period. See Levin, *Sex and Society*, 60n71; and Thyrêt, "Women and the Orthodox Faith," 162–167.

and servants, dispensed charity to the needy, and achieved holiness through God's grace. Among these holy women were also those who had traumatic experiences within a patriarchal society because they had been raped, threatened with rape, or physically abused by their husbands. Some even sought to escape the strictures of patriarchalism by taking on masculine traits and in extreme cases disguising themselves as men.[23] In addition to providing role models, these female saints were gatekeepers to the miraculous. The Russian holy women who were recognized as saints in the medieval period, when sanctity rested upon "popular commemoration of their pious acts" rather than a regularized canonization process conducted by the church hierarchy, came from various social groups.[24] Since neither wealth nor social status were prerequisites for God's divine grace, the message was clear that "holiness" was available to any woman, rich or poor. The popular veneration of female "holy fools for Christ" in the 18th and 19th centuries, some of whom possessed humble peasant backgrounds, attests to a continuing tradition of a democracy of holiness, at least in the popular mind, even when the Holy Synod, the governing body of the Russian Orthodox Church from 1721 until 1918, in regularizing the procedures for canonization and severely limiting its frequency preferred to sanctify prominent bishops within its own ranks.[25] The canonization of a popular poor merchant's son and spiritual elder, Serafim Sarovskii, in 1903 and the reaffirmation of the sanctity of Anna Kashinskaia in 1909 (after having prohibited her veneration since the end of the 17th century) proved the exceptions to the rule.[26]

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[23] Talbot, *Holy Women*; and Levin, *Sex and Society*, 214–215, 280.

[24] Thyrêt, "Women and the Orthodox Faith," 163, 162.

[25] Holy fools for Christ were believed to be imbued with God's grace. Through unconventional behavior and renunciation of worldly pleasures, the medieval holy fools criticized the political and social status quo, while the imperial Russian holy fools dispensed spiritual and worldly advice. Popularly venerated female holy fools in the 18th and 19th centuries included Ksenia Peterburgskaia, Pelageia Diveevskaia, Paraskeva Diveevskaia, Mariia Ivanovna Diveevskaia, Masha Mukhanovskaia Riazanskaia, and Annushka Riazanskaia (*Blazhennaia Pelageia*; Kizenko, "Protectors of Women," 111; and Rudinskii, "Znakharstvo," 193, 195).

[26] The Russian Orthodox Church's denial of Anna Kashinskaia's (d. 1338) sanctity in 1677, after having canonized her in 1649, came in the midst of the church schism. Prelates were concerned that Kashinskaia's positioning of her fingers to make the sign of the cross signified that she was a

No less important for Russian Orthodox women of all ranks were the scores of male saints and uncanonized deceased holy men who through their intercession with God healed a variety of illnesses regardless of gender or age.[27] Some even specialized in childhood and women's ailments. Through its thaumaturgical arsenal the church had a far more benevolent attitude toward illnesses that plagued women than 19th-century medical practitioners who hystericized the female body. The fact that ordinary women had access to spiritual help from 19th-century elders and monks as well as the miraculous gave them hope in the face of life's uncertainties. Perhaps even more importantly, the church depended upon those women who experienced miracles to authenticate the miraculous by reporting their and their relatives' cures at holy sites.

"The immediacy of the sacred" to all believers, both women and men, worked "to level . . . the gendered hierarchy" of the church itself.[28] As a result, a minority of Russian women were inspired by the religious models before them to become independent women religious, while the majority actively participated in ecclesial communities that gave them spiritual and physical comfort, helped them celebrate important passages of life and holy feast days, released them temporarily from daily burdens to go on pilgrimage, and in some cases empowered them. The stories of Abbess Taisiia and the Smolensk *klikusha*, presented at the outset of the chapter, illuminate the ways in which the divine was accessible to women of different stations and occupations in life.

Although Abbess Taisiia's position as head of a woman's monastery was not the norm among women religious, her autobiography is reflective of larger 19th-century trends. The abbess had

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heretic: "Anna Kashinskaia," in Averintsev, Meshkov, and Popov, *Khristianstvo*, 1: 85; and Isakov, *Zhitie Anny Kashinskoi*.

[27] In the miracle tales attributed to three holy men canonized by the Russian Orthodox Church in the early 20th century—Serafim Sarovskii in 1903, Ioasaf Belgorodskii and Oboianskii in 1911, and Pitirim Tambovskii in 1914—women, adolescent girls, and female children accounted for just over 50 percent of the recipients of miracles (53.6 percent in the case of St. Serafim, 57 percent in the case of St. Ioasaf, and 57 percent in the case of St. Pitirim), a figure that is similar to the percentage (53.5) of female recipients of miracles in the tales attributed to Dmitrii Rostovskii, who was canonized in 1757. As I argue elsewhere, these miracles "cut across lines of class, sex, age, and status" (Worobec, "Miraculous Healings," 30. The quotation is from Goodich, *Violence and Miracle*, 151).

[28] Kivelson and Greene, "Introduction," in their edited *Orthodox Russia*, 10.

abandoned the normal life-course of an upper-class woman. Eschewing marriage, children, wealth, and estate management, she chose the contemplative and public life of a woman religious who at one and the same time emulated the asceticism of the early desert mothers and fathers and reached out to the larger community by offering social services and educational opportunities for orphans, young girls, the elderly, and the sick. Charitable work as part of a religious vocation for women was new to the 19th century.[29] Impressionable young women from among the nobility may also have been attracted to the cloistered life by an idealized notion of that life. Varvara Mikhailovna Sokovnina (1779–18??), abbess of the Vveden Monastery in the city of Orel from 1821 until 1844, recalled that as a teenager seeking to escape her difficult mother, she was influenced by one of her acquaintance's description of the Sevsk Troitse (women's) Monastery as "'a heavenly dwelling place, inhabited by peaceful and meek souls and administered by three angels, who in their unanimity resemble the Holy Trinity.'"[30] Other noble women chose the contemplative life only after they had fulfilled their responsibilities as wives and mothers.

Overall, however, the representation of the nobility within the women's monastic estate declined dramatically in the late 18th and 19th centuries due to the social democratization of women's monasteries. As Westernization and rising literacy gave noble women other options for independence, they lost, according to Marlyn Miller, "their hold on the power structure" of monastic institutions. The Catherinian reforms had not only significantly reduced the number of monasteries but also designated a limited number of spaces for nuns in each surviving institution. Subsequent openings were to be allocated to "clerical and military women."[31]

Thousands of women from the other social estates in Russian society, particularly from the peasantry, sought independence by entering or founding religious communities. Between 1764 and 1917, 217 unofficial Orthodox women's religious communities were founded in Imperial Russia, while the number of Orthodox women's monasteries grew exponentially in the same period, from 68 to 475 (with the number of nuns and novices increasing

[29] Lindenmeyr, *Poverty is Not a Vice*, 16.

[30] "Serafima," translated by William G. Wagner in Bisha, *Russian Women*, 276.

[31] Miller, "Social Revolution," 172.

from 5,105 to 73,299).[32] These figures do not include the thousands of unofficial women religious and the countless number of *chernichki* (referring to the black clothing they wore) or *keleinitsy* (a word that emphasized their separate dwellings or cells). *Chernichki* and *keleinitsy* were lay sisters who did not enter a religious institution but followed the ascetic rigors of monastic life. They lived either alone or in a small group at the edge of villages or in their parents' yards. Some *keleinitsy* chose to eschew community living and in imitation of the ancient desert mothers built cells or dug caves in the wilderness.[33] Although these lower class women who entered religious communities were increasingly single (i.e., never married) due in part to the growing popularity of communally organized religious communities, some of them waited to assume religious functions until they had fulfilled their marital and childbearing responsibilities.[34] Seeking "an alternative to domesticity," they took on the mantle of women religious in both officially and unofficially recognized religious communities.[35] Inspired by the Mother of God, they sought a life of serving God, one that celebrated compassion, humility, intercession on behalf of the poor, and social engagement, all in the company of women. A

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[32] Meehan, "From Contemplative Practice," 142; and Smolich, *Russkoe monashestvo*, 563, Tables X and XI.

[33] For a discussion of *chernichki* and *keleinitsy*, see Tul'tseva, "Chernichki," 80–81; and Gromyko and Buganov, *O vozzreniiakh russkogo naroda*, 201, 218, 220, 226–227, 228. The *keleinitsa* Mariia Sherstiugova, who chose to live as a hermit in a cave that she carved out of a mountain in the Don Cossack area, not only attracted pilgrims, but also received the imprimatur of Alexander I (Paert, *Spiritual Elders*, 72).

[34] Traditional, idiorrhythmically organized women's monastic institutions favored widows of the upper and middling ranks who used their own property to support themselves. Independence of means gave these women relative autonomy within the monastic walls. The shift to communally organized communities occurred with the support of Metropolitan Filaret (Drozdov), who held that position from 1826 to 1867. See Wagner, "Paradoxes of Piety," 222n30; and Meehan, "Metropolitan Filaret," 310–323.

According to the 1721 Spiritual Regulation, women could not be tonsured until they had reached the age of 50; in the 19th century the age of tonsuring was lowered to 40 (Meehan, "Authority of Holiness," 51n35). Although "technically. . . a novice," a *riasofor* nun had "take[n] an intermediate vow" ("Mavrikiia in Schema Maria," translated by William G. Wagner, in Bisha, *Russian Women*, 288n62).

[35] Marker, "Enlightenment of Anna Labzina," 369.

surfeit of single and widowed women in late 19th-century Russian villages that resulted from the economic and social dislocations of increasing male out-migration to the cities, where mortality rates were higher than in the countryside, also contributed to the phenomenal growth of sisterhoods and women's religious communities.[36] Those who did not wish in the end to take up the rigors of cloistered life could, nonetheless, find employment and shelter in these institutions.

The empowerment of women religious came from taking up a celibate life among a community of women in a culture where marriage was almost universal, engaging the sacred, performing "liturgical roles normally preserved for men," and extending their natural talents as nurturers to the larger community.[37] Those who attained leadership positions within their communities enjoyed far greater authority than women did in patriarchal households. In addition to dedicating themselves to a life of prayer, asceticism, and mysticism, women religious provided a variety of social services. They taught other women and children rudimentary literacy skills, ministered to homeless and widowed women as well as the poor and sick, read the psalter over the dead, and baked communion bread.

Given the prominent visibility of women religious in turn-of-the-20th-century Russian society and their engagement with worldly affairs, some churchmen and abbesses (including Grand Princess Elizabeth Fedorovna) proposed reinstating the ancient position of deaconess, a lower ministry that had served women, instructed them in the particulars of the faith, and supervised the comportment of women and children in church during services. Initially, such requests came from missionaries in the mid- and late 19th century who needed the help of a female deaconate in their conversion efforts by teaching and ministering to the poor. Given the fact that some 19th-century Protestant churches in Western Europe had already restored the ancient position, conservatives within the Russian Orthodox Church pointed to the inappropriateness of a female deaconate in Russia not only as a violation of canon law, but also as an unwelcome foreign innovation. The unacceptability of women preachers in Russian Orthodoxy and the visibility of women preachers among "heretical" Old Believers

[36] Meehan, "Popular Piety," 99; and Wagner, "Paradoxes of Piety," 222.
[37] Wagner, "Paradoxes of Piety," 223.

and sectarians no doubt also fueled this distrust of a separate women's ministry. By 1906, concrete proposals nevertheless were drafted to expand the ancient roles of deaconesses to include cleaning of the church premises, if not the area around the high altar and communion vessels. These clerics may have not only been bowing to necessity in face of the fact that parishes were reporting a shortage of male caretakers. They may also have recognized the interrelationship between the sacred space in the parish church and the private dwelling because women had traditionally served as caretakers of the icon corners in their own homes.[38] Like nuns, ordained deaconesses were to be widows and single women over 39 years of age, although younger women could serve as assistants. Another model for the position of the deaconess proposed integrating them within women's monasteries. Such women who did not wish to undergo tonsure could still be involved in the social services dispensed by the monastery, while nuns could return to the rigors of a contemplative life that privileged spiritual over social functions. Such proposals for the restoration of a female deaconate came to naught, however. While the creation of the position was raised again at the 1917–1918 National Church Council on the strength of need as well as women's petitions to become deaconesses, those discussions became moot as the Russian Orthodox Church found itself in a battle for survival with the Bolshevik regime. Ironically, women during the Soviet period did serve as caretakers of parish churches and were in essence deaconesses without formal ordination and recognition.[39]

Women who wished to intercede on behalf of the poor and the suffering in Christ's name did not have to take the paths of Mother Taisiia and scores of other women religious, whether

[38] The notion of the interconnection between sacred and domestic spaces comes from Hart, *Time*, 24, 147. That interconnection in Orthodoxy goes further, Hart argues, when women bring candles and holy water from the church to the icon corners in their homes.

[39] Beliakova and Beliakova, "Obsuzhdenie voprosa o diakonissakh," 141–142, 143, 144, 145–146; 149–150, 154. For a favorable early 20th-century view of a female deaconate within the Russian Orthodox Church, see Troitskii, *Diakonissy*. Troitskii argued that women were more devoted to the church than were men. For an English translation of a woman's petition in favor of the female deaconate, see Gerasimova, "To the All-Russian Local Council," in Bisha, *Russian Women*, 284–286.

official or unofficial. They could do so within secular society. Continuing in the tradition of tsars' wives and aristocratic Muscovite women who performed acts of pious charity, 18th- and 19th-century noblewomen also performed the role of intercessor in both prayer and deed. For example, the provincial noblewoman, Anna Labzina (1758–1828), evoked the intercessory roles of the Mother of God and her own mother as she ministered to the needs of serfs on her mother's estates, exiles in Nerchinsk (near the Chinese border), and prisoners in Irkutsk, Siberia. Such social engagement was part of Labzina's Christian duty to a gentle and merciful God and a deep love for humanity. Other noblewomen in the 19th century followed Labzina's lead out of religious convictions that empowered them in a patriarchal society that, like its European counterparts, limited the work of women outside the home.[40] Among the great benefactors of monastic institutions in the 1840s figured the religiously devout Countess Anna A. Orlova-Chesmenskaia who lavished huge sums of money and gifts of precious metals and gems upon Novgorod's Iur'ev Monastery and regularly donated substantial funds to the Troitse-Sergieva Monastery in Sergiev Posad (just outside Moscow) to feed poor pilgrims and care for the poverty-stricken. In her will she also endowed every monastery in Russia with a donation of 5,000 rubles. Countess Orlova-Chesmenskaia hoped that her generosity and strict Christian regimen would expiate the sins of her father, not least of which was his participation in the assassination of Peter III.[41] Similarly, in the late 19th century Countess Maria Vladimirovna Orlova-Davydova contributed a total of 1,300 desiatins of land and close to a quarter million rubles to establish a community of 25 women religious to minister to poor peasants in Dobrynin, Moscow diocese.[42] Besides making gifts to monasteries, upper class Orthodox women actively participated in other acts of charity, visiting the poor, attending to prisoners, and volunteering at hospitals and orphanages.[43]

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[40] Marker, "God of Our Mothers," 193–210; and Lindenmeyr, *Poverty Is Not a Vice*, chs. 1 and 6.

[41] Zyrianov, *Russkie monastyri*, 77–78; and Kenworthy, *Heart of Russia*, 48, 58.

[42] "Countess Orlova-Davydova," translated by William G. Wagner, in Bisha, *Russian Women*, 280–281. Other 19th-century benefactresses included Baroness Bode, D. A. Derzhavina, and the landowner Belokopytova, who donated or bequeathed land to monastic institutions. (Zyrianov, *Russkie monastyri*, 84.)

[43] See Lindenmeyr, "Public Life," 562–591.

Possessed women, unlike women religious and noblewomen, sought spiritual redemption by way of a different path—one of extreme torment that could only be relieved by spiritual healing at the hands of monks and nuns who treated them with the thaumaturgical arsenal of Orthodoxy, including: prayer and exorcism; confession and communion; holy oil and holy water, and blessed herbs. Like women religious, they were relieved of family responsibilities, if only temporarily, until their demons were exorcized. They sought spiritual help through pilgrimage to holy shrines and monasteries renowned for their ministrations to the sick and possessed. Until the mid-19th century they, like women religious, came from all social groupings. However, by the end of the 19th century as the proportion of peasant membership in women's monasteries increased appreciably, shriekers stemmed almost entirely from the peasantry and recent migrants to the city. That change resulted from the success of the medical profession in convincing upper and middle class women that they were suffering from hysteria rather than possession. The medicalization of possession and hystericization of women's bodies transferred what had been culturally understood as a spiritual ailment to the realm of a diseased mind, best taken care of by psychiatrists rather than clerics. Unaffected by medical science, peasant culture continued to produce *klikushi*. Unlike women religious, who were either single or widowed, most shriekers were of child-bearing age. They were unable to cope with all the demands that their society placed upon them as wives, mothers, obedient daughters-in-law, and during an increasing out-pouring of men from the villages to seek work in towns and cities, primary managers of their domestic economies. Besides gaining relief from family burdens, they received solicitude from family members, neighbors, and clergy and some alteration in personal circumstances upon having been healed. They, like women religious and pious lay women, could be empowered by their experiences. Those who were the beneficiaries of miraculous cures became the subject of community memory and pride, while others achieved greater respect and social status as a result of rooting out evil from their communities. Still others remained demoniacs for several years. Having played out their emotional anxieties through possession, they found their new elevated role as sufferer preferable to returning to their everyday positions as wives, mothers, and daughters-in-law. By allowing these women's suffering to be publicly expressed, Russian peasant society and clergy participated in their social healing.

Besides providing evidence about the ways by which women religious and *klikushi* could be empowered by their spiritual experiences, the stories of Abbess Taisiia and demoniacs also reveal women's concrete experiences with the divine in terms of religious ecstasy and the gift of tears. Abbess Taisiia described her "ecstatic rapture" as being accompanied by "tears ... streaming down my face." The Old Church Slavonic word *umilenie* comes to mind here. "Untranslatable because of the richness of sense inherent in it," the word refers to emotions invoked by God's grace as a result of intense devotion through prayer.[44] It is associated with the famous Novgorod icon of the *Umilenie* Mother of God, which reportedly shed tears when the icon had fallen from the iconostasis in July 1337.[45] The image of a weeping icon of the Mother of God, in turn, evokes the popular apocryphal tale "The Descent of the Virgin into Hell," in which the Virgin wept and even sobbed when she witnessed the torments of Christian sinners in the various sectors of Hell. Her compassion led her to intercede personally and summon all saints and guardian angels to intercede with God on behalf of all those sinners.[46] According to Thyrêt: "One of the most highly prized spiritual qualities in Muscovite Russia," the gift of tears in medieval miracle tales "tended [to be] attributed to women, rather than men," even though the experience of *umilenie* was believed to be gender neutral.[47] Abbess Taisiia depicted in her autobiography another example of *umilenie*, this time with regard to an elderly nun of peasant origin whom she witnessed by accident in her cell at the Tikhvin Vveden (women's) Monastery in Novgorod province, where Taisiia had been a novice. She described Mother Feoktista as kneeling "in a corner of her room, with her arms uplifted. Her lips were moving and her face wet with tears, which were also streaming down her clothes." "Involuntarily," she wrote, "I had become a witness of the inner secret of an aged nun's soul." Mother Feoktista subsequently became a model for Taisiia to emulate.[48] The peasant hermit Anastasia Semenovna

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[44] Fedotov, *Russian Religious Mind*, 393. The phrase "gift of tears" stems from the writings of the fourth-century Evgarius of Pontus (Hart, *Time*, 202).

[45] Coomler, *Icon Handbook,* 238.

[46] The tale is reprinted in English translation in Zenkovsky, *Medieval Russia's Epics*, 152–160.

[47] Thyrêt, *Between God and Tsar*, 136; and Thyrêt, "Women and the Orthodox Faith," 169.

[48] Meehan, *Holy Women*, 111–112.

Logacheva (1809–1875), who became a spiritual elder at the Nikolaev Ulala Monastery in Tomsk province, "was [also] known to have the gift of tears."[49] These and other descriptions of ecstasy and accomplishment underscored for women the rewards of pursuing a higher calling in life achieved by following the rigors of the monastic order.

The stories of *klikushi* also contain references to the gift of tears. Fedor Dostoevsky aptly used the term *umilenie* in his *Brothers Karamazov* to describe women who witnessed a miraculous cure of a *klikusha* as a result of the elder Father Zosima's intercession. Through their suffering and genuine possession, Dostoevsky believed, demoniacs reached a higher state of spiritual ecstasy that he associated with the holiest of people. His narrator explains shriekers' cures before the communion cup as being directly related to their belief in the power of Christ's Body over the demons possessing them.[50] Dostoevsky's reference to the communion cup being given to *klikushi* bespoke of the Orthodox belief that the victims of demon possession were not responsible for their situation. In distinguishing the possessed who were worthy of communion from those individuals whose actions made them unworthy of the host, the church Father, John Chrysostom advised, "Let no one inhuman, no one rough and unmerciful, least of all any one unclean approach here. This I say not only to you, who seek to receive the Communion, but also to you, whose ministry it is to give it.... *They that be possest in that they are tormented of the devil are blameless and will never be punished with torment for that:* but they who approach unworthily the holy Mysteries shall be given over to everlasting torments."[51] The tears that *klikushi* shed after successful exorcisms were also signs of great piety. According to the 1911 exorcist account of Father Skubachevskii, he directed the woman from whom he had driven demons with the help of St. Ioasaf Belgorodskii to pray with him to the saint in thanksgiving. As he did so the woman "began quietly to repeat the words of the prayer after me and began to cry." When she kissed the holy relics, the priest ordered her to lift her head up so that he could bless her with the life-giving cross and then asked her to give thanks to "God's holy saint." The woman prostrated herself before the holy relics, and "all those present could not keep back the tears" as they witnessed God's grace

[49] Meehan, "Authority of Holiness," 39–40.

[50] Dostoevsky, *Brat'ia Karamazovy*, 49.

[51] Quoted in Blackmore, *Doctrine of the Russian Church*, 223–224n1.

upon the shrieker and the radiance of ecstasy on her face.[52] Just as the nuns' gift of tears influenced the women around them, the ecstatic experience that women enjoyed as a result of the expulsion of their demons had a profound effect upon the congregants who witnessed the spiritual healing and had their own faith reaffirmed. The fact that women outside of the religious establishment could attain the highest form of religious ecstasy through the gift of tears demonstrated the democratizing nature of religious belief.

Finally, the stories of 19th-century women religious and *klikushi* overlap in terms of the experience of pilgrimage, one that also enveloped a larger population of ordinary but devout women. Pilgrimage held out tangible hope to the disabled and diseased, their relatives, and all believers who could not take their good health for granted. Through their prayers for the intercession of the Mother of God, Christ, saints, and other holy persons, and their vows to visit saints' graves, the ill, handicapped, and sick at heart could hope to attain God's mercy and grace. Even if their physical illnesses were not cured, they came away renewed from having entered holy space and having shared in the miraculous—that is, the presence of a saint and the Mother of God.[53]

Although men also went on pilgrimages, in the course of the 19th century it appears largely from impressionistic accounts that female pilgrims outnumbered their male counterparts. For example, observers of pilgrims at the Troitse-Sergieva Lavra in Sergiev Posad in the 1870s and 1880s commented on the predominance of women.[54] A Smolensk newspaper reporter, describing the scores of pilgrims who descended upon the village Rybki in Dorogobuzh district for the celebration of the Day of the Ascension by paying their respects to a miracle-working icon of the Mother of God, similarly noted the overwhelming number of women among

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[52] Skubachevskii, "Belgorodskiia torzhestva," 126–127.

[53] See Wunderli's description of pilgrimage shrines in his *Peasant Fires*, 60–61.

[54] See Rostislavov, *Opyt issledovaniia*, 110; and Filimonov, *Sergiev Posad*, 91–92. Unfortunately, reliable statistics on the identity of pilgrims have not yet been uncovered. Using archival documents, Scott Kenworthy estimates that in the 1880s, 400,000 pilgrims visited the Troitse-Sergieva Monastery annually, while by 1900 that figure had grown to over 600,000 (Kenworthy, *Heart of Russia*, 186). The Russian historian M. M. Gromyko, who has combed the archives on the subject of pilgrimages, notes the greater number of women than men among pilgrims. (Gromyko and Buganov, *O vozzreniiakh*, 153.)

the worshipers: "A lot of women, in particular, come on pilgrimmage; many of them hail from a hundred or more versts away...." Another Smolensk reporter, writing about the annual pilgrimage of peasants to the city of Smolensk to pray before the miracle-working Smolensk Hodigitriia icon on the Day of Ascension, spoke of "several thousands of peasants, mainly women."[55] Early 20th-century descriptions of pilgrims at holy sites also privileged women. An anonymous correspondent for *Pravitel'stvennyi vestnik* painted the following scene of ill pilgrims at the Sarov Uspenie Hermitage in Tambov province, who were hoping to receive a cure with the intercession of Serafim Sarovskii:

> Along the road to the spring one can see a multitude of ill [persons]. Here on a stretcher—of two sticks with a cloth stretched over them—they are carrying an ill girl; in a cart they are leading a sick man whose legs are paralyzed; a pale, weak, sick woman, having put her arms around the shoulders of two women, hardly moves her legs, every minute using up her breath from exhaustion; a hunchbacked old woman goes on two crutches; holding the stick of a boy-leader, a blind man walks with his head high; behind him a boy hops on a crutch with a bent leg; a woman moved on her legs and arms, like a 4-legged [animal], contorted in the waist....[56]

Lastly, according to a report on pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the 1880s, which was considerably more arduous and costly than pilgrimages within European Russia, between 58 and 70 percent of the pilgrims were women whose average age fell between 35 and 50.[57] In seeking salvation these predominantly older women were fulfilling a lifetime desire and in some cases vows to visit the holy sites of Christ's life before they died.

Released from the cares of everyday life, pilgrims sought spiritual solace, renewal, and even redemption or were fulfilling vows they had made to God and the saints for cures of illness or delivery from unfortunate circumstances. These trips were conscious choices that the faithful made as they sought to experience the mystery, "enchanted time and space," and "unfamiliar light" of

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[55] *Smolenskii vestnik*, 12 June 1891; and Grachev, "Prazdnik vozneseniia Gospodnia."

[56] Reprinted in "Izvestiia i zametki," 441.

[57] Solov'ev, *Sviataia zemlia*, 131; and Vorob'eva, *Russkie missii*, 112. Pilgrimages to Jerusalem and neighboring sites were most popular around Easter, Christmas, and just before Lent.

a holy place. Women who chose the pilgrimage route were abandoning, if only temporarily, all their obligations and deference to the power structures of household, village, or community. Indeed, pilgrimages represented liberating acts that created new social relationships.[58] As important social occasions during which participants forged friendships, exchanged gossip, shared provisions, and uttered prayers individually or in unison, pilgrimages served as cathartic experiences for the sick and well.[59] Pilgrims returning to the sites of their healing to give thanks for their recovery provided hope to those who were making the trip for the first time.

The biographies of women religious are replete with references to pilgrimages as having shaped their lives. Pelageia Efimova Ovsiannikova (1813–1877), who later became Abbess Pavlina of the Belevsk Krestovozdvizhensk Monastery in Tula province and whose extreme humility impressed the elder Makarii of the Optina Hermitage, had been exposed to the regimen of a women's monastery when she was a child. She had learned to read in a religious community that was close to her parents' home in the *sloboda* (suburb) of the town of Mtsensk, Orel province. However, her life changed forever when, at age 16, she went with her mother on pilgrimage to the Belevsk Monastery. Witnessing the devotion of the women religious there, she decided to enter the cloister as a novice. The life of Abbess Evgeniia (1800–1885), the founder of the Tikhvin Monastery in the town of Buzuluk, Orenburg province, was similarly transformed by a pilgrimage she took as a 12-year-old girl with her parents to the Sarov Hermitage in Tambov province, where the elder Serafim not only blessed her, but also pointed out that she was among the elect. Not yet ready to sever all ties with her family and to give up her responsibilities to them, she spent the next 20 years as a member of the Kirsanov religious community in Tambov near her parents' home and then several years in a separate cell in Buzuluk, when her parents moved to a village near that town. Similar stories abound in the biographies of women religious who went on pilgrimages later in life for spiritual renewal.[60] Abbess Taisiia specifically went on pilgrimage to the 11th-century Caves Monastery in Kiev to pray at the founding monk's, St. Anthony's, grave for inspiration in her quest to build a stone church in honor of the Mother of God at Leushino.

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[58] Wunderli, *Peasant Fires*, 61.

[59] Obeyesekere, *Medusa's Hair*, 2.

[60] Gromyko and Buganov, *O vozzreniiakh*, 216ff.

St. Anthony had dedicated the monastery's main church to the Mother of God.[61] Pilgrimages for young girls could thus be formative experiences in convincing them to devote their lives to God, or in the case of women religious, could reaffirm their faith and inspire them to follow the paths of sainted Russian monks.

Other women religious became professional pilgrims. In 1897 an elderly and illiterate noblewoman described herself to an observer as a pilgrim by profession. As a teenager she dreamed about the contemplative life, spending most of her time praying. Once the "Bogoliubskaia Queen of Heaven herself came to me with all the saints." Unable to resist outright her mother's insistence that she marry, the anonymous woman identified only as "Ts." agreed to go through with a wedding ceremony, but fled from the estate immediately after the nuptials, dedicating her life to wandering from religious site to religious site. For the next 33 years she supported her wanderings to such faraway places as Solovki (in the White Sea region) and Jerusalem by selling lace that she had made herself.[62] In the middle of the 19th century the *keleinitsa* (self-proclaimed religious person) Anis'ia Romanova of the *sloboda* Dedilova, Tula province, went on numerous pilgrimmages. She traveled several times to holy sites in Kiev, Moscow, and Voronezh. She also ventured out to monasteries in Zadonsk, the Solovki Archipelago, and in 1852 and again in 1858 to Jerusalem. In all of these places she studied the contemplative way of life and purchased icons as well as books recounting the lives of the saints and containing prayer cycles. Upon her return to Russia from a year in Jerusalem, Romanova attracted people of all ranks to her with her tales of the Holy Land and the mementoes—candles that she had burned in Christ's tomb at Easter, crosses, and other religious paraphernalia from the Holy Land—that she was prepared to sell.[63] Scores of other professional women pilgrims traversed the Russian landscape, bringing communion bread, candles, holy water and oil, and other material items from monasteries to the rural and urban faithful and carrying the donations, ribbons, cloth, and requests of these same faithful, who themselves could not go on pilgrimage, to monastic shrines.

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[61] Meehan, *Holy Women*, 127.

[62] *Kto pomogaiut gorodskiia popechitel'stva?* 47–48. The wanderer interpreted the death of her husband, which occurred only six weeks after the wedding, as God's punishment.

[63] Gromyko and Buganov, *O vozzreniiakh*, 149–150.

Like women religious, *klikushi* regularly went on pilgrimages. However, they did not seek personal renewal, but rather sought the help of monks and nuns who specialized in exorcisms, which generally involved the intoning of prayers. For example, Elena Afanas'eva Shibakova, a married peasant woman from the village Slobodka in Moscow province, sought help initially at the Lavrentiev Monastery and then the Tikhonova Hermitage, both located in Kaluga province, before heading off to an almshouse church in Suzdal', the Simonov Monastery in Moscow, the Troitse-Sergieva Monastery in Sergiev Posad, and finally, in 1903, to the Sarov Hermitage in the diocese of Tambov. Moscow's Simonov Monastery was particularly renowned for ministering to shriekers. In the late 19th century the demoniac Vasilisa Alekseeva, after making the rounds of several other monasteries, ended up at the Simonov Monastery, which she described as housing between 30 and 40 shriekers at any one time. There, Father Mark affirmed Vasilisa's belief that she was possessed and advised her to stay at the monastery for six weeks. During that interval she was to attend special services from 3 a.m. until 1 p.m. each day and to take his treatment of grasses, oils, and communion bread for six weeks.[64]

While the stories of the women religious and *klikushi* emphasize their individual experiences, pilgrims traveled in groups, with relatives and neighbors. In the early spring, summer, and early fall, European Russia was awash with pilgrims traveling to holy shrines to celebrate saints' days and other religious holidays. The Rostov Rozhdestvensk (women's) Monastery, which housed the miracle-working icon of the Tikhvin Mother of God, for example, saw pilgrims from Rostov and neighboring counties on the following feast days: 17 March (St. Aleksei), 9 May and 6 December (St. Nicholas the Wonder-Worker); 26 June (the icon of the Tikhvin Mother of God); 8 August (the icon of the Tolga Mother of God); 8 September (Nativity of the Mother of God); 21 September (St. Dimitrii Rostovskii); and 4 December (St. Barbara the Martyr).[65] Other monasteries with miracle-working icons had similar calendars that beckoned pilgrims to them regularly.

Seeking cures for themselves and often their family members, pilgrims also sought the help of about-to-be-canonized holy men. Religious newspaper and journal reports as well as letters

[64] Nikitin, "K voprosu o klikushestve," 662; Krainskii, *Porcha*, 109–110; and Worobec, *Possessed*, 83–84.

[65] Gromyko and Buganov, *O vozzreniiakh*, 145.

from elders at the famous Optina Hermitage encouraged villagers to time pilgrimages to coincide with canonization and relic translation services, occasions when a saint's power was thought to be heightened. The 1896 glorification of St. Feodosii Chernigovskii was followed in rapid succession by the glorification of five other saints and affirmation of the holiness of Anna Kashinskaia, a woman canonized in pre-Petrine Russia, in the decade and a half before the February Revolution. These canonizations drew hundreds of thousands of pilgrims.

Women pilgrims asked saints for the amelioration of a whole host of illnesses and problems, most of which were not specifically female in nature. With the exception of demonic possession and scattered references to infertility and other gynecological difficulties, and occasionally a hint of marital discord, miracle tales recorded ailments common to men and women. They ranged from endemic diseases such as typhus, measles, diphtheria, consumption, and dysentery to abscesses, paralysis, tuberculosis of the bones, peritonitis, rheumatism, and life-threatening debilities, to congenital defects. When these illnesses were so debilitating that their victims could not embark on pilgrimages to holy shrines, women and men might instead have dreamed of a particular saint at night in the security of their homes. These visions were followed by either immediate or incremental cures and the obligation on the part of the healed to visit the saint's gravesite to give personal thanks and order services for the saint's memory.[66] Healings could also take place through contact with material objects connected to a saint. Thus, it was common for a mother to pour water over a saint's icon or an icon of the Mother of God in a vessel, wet the sick child's or adult's head with the "holy" runoff, and have the patient drink some of the water.[67] The miracle narratives also repeatedly refer to the application of holy water, holy oil from the votives illuminating icons in the saints' crypts, wadding from the saints' coffins, and pieces of saints' clothing to diseased areas of the body. While the use of such objects did not always result in a cure, it appeared to believers that their employment increased the probability of the saint's intercession. So important was materiality that a substantial, if controlled, modern consumer industry of holy objects developed at pilgrimage sites within and around monasteries' walls. Such objects gave hope to women for

[66] Worobec, "Miraculous Healings," 26.

[67] *Skazanie o zhizni*, 73; and Shevzov, "Poeticizing Piety," 367.

the alleviation of their ailments as well as those of their children and husbands.[68]

Although many of the ailments in the miracle tales of the early 20th century were not gender specific, less common miracle stories dealing with marital difficulties and defiance of male authority shed some light on the ways in which Orthodoxy could empower women. In one such tale we learn about the husband of a peasant woman who denied his wife, who was suffering from an undefined "woman's ailment," permission to go on pilgrimage to Belgorod for the 1911 translation of Ioasaf's relics. The wife not only defied her husband by going on the pilgrimage, but she also became the beneficiary of a miraculous cure through St. Ioasaf's intercession. In the end, when the husband contracted a liver problem, the wife refused to get him the medical treatment he needed and he died.[69] The tale suggested that the man's callous treatment of his wife, not his wife's negligence, was responsible for his death. It also highlighted the superiority of a male saint's authority over that of a husband. The wife had used the saint's superiority in defying and seeking independence from her spouse. Similarly, Anna Labzina in the late 18th century turned to the higher authority of God to gain independence from her abusive first husband even while she respected his patriarchal rights over her. "She said to her husband Katamyshev, 'You have the authority to deprive me of my property and peace of mind, but you cannot take away my conscience and good name.... So long as the hand of God protects me I shall not stray from the path of virtue and I shall not accept your advice.'" Neither Labzina nor her peasant counterpart more than a century later were slaves to "obedience" and "silent suffering."[70] There were also miracle stories in which the Mother of God "went to great efforts to enlighten and spiritually reorient the offending spouse." Finally, a miracle tale involving the intercession of the Mother of God sanctioned a woman's rebuke of a priest for not observing Sundays and feast days properly. In the midst of the singing of the Cherubikon (the same hymn that produced Abbess Taisiia's mystical experience and the Smolensk shrieker's demonic attack), this ailing 28-year-old woman had a vision of Mary who directed her to lecture the officiating priest publicly. When the priest refused to believe Ekaterina's claims of

[68] Worobec, "Miraculous Healings," 30, 31.

[69] "Novye chudesa Sviatitelia Ioasafa," 524.

[70] Quoted in Marker, "God of Our Mothers," 207; also see 209.

having seen the Mother of God, the Virgin cured the woman of her ailment. The subversive nature of this miracle tale clearly bypassed the notice of a church censor when he approved the tale as the subject of an official publication.[71] No doubt some women, who did not leave memoirs or who were not the recipients of miraculous cures, were emboldened by stories such as these and by the tenets of their faith to assert their independence from abusive spouses or obnoxious priests. For those who chose to suffer in silence, such stories of empowerment provided them with hope of heavenly retribution against the offending parties.

The tales that enumerate miraculously cured diseases and the visions that individuals of all classes had of the Mother of God and individual saints unfortunately reveal little about the spiritual transformations of the recipients of miracles. We can only surmise from incomplete pieces of information the powerful effect that miraculous cures must have had on the recipients as well as throngs of witnesses. In the early 20th century, for example, Klavdiia Pavlova Malinina, the spouse of a Ranenburg school inspector, described her soul upon kneeling at the grave of St. Ioasaf Belgorodskii and beseeching him to help her walk. She said that it felt "light and comforted, exactly [the way it felt] on the Blessed Easter Holiday."[72] In Malinina's case the anticipation of the cure began her spiritual transformation, or at least that is how she chose to remember that transformation. In another case, it was a cured woman's strong faith that left an indelible impression upon the religious and lay men who heard her testimony. The story of Nadezhda Lagutina, who was cured from life-threatening hemorrhaging as a result of the intercession of St. Pitirim Tambovskii, so moved the investigating committee set up to verify the miracles attributed to Pitirim before his canonization in 1914 that it waived its requirement that there be more witnesses to her miracle than simply the woman's spouse. The testimonies of Lagutina and her husband, in which Lagutina swore that she was providing "absolute truth before God," demonstrated such a deep faith in the miraculous power of St. Pitirim that "there is no room for doubt in the existence of miraculous facts in the case of Lagutina's healing."[73]

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[71] Shevzov, *Russian Orthodoxy*, 234–235, 221.

[72] "Novye sluchai," 700.

[73] RGIA, Fond 796, opis' 195, number 1449 [Kanonizatsiia Pitirima], ff. 123, 122v.

Lagutina's testimony also indicated that she initially thought herself to be unworthy of a miraculous healing. "Considering myself to be unworthy of such great grace from God, I was silent about my healing a long time, but my conscience does not give me peace, and I decided to report [it] now."[74] Lagutina's reticence to come before a church commission may say something about her humility as well as her reaction to the negative portrayals of women that clergy sometimes painted. At the same time, her experience could not remain personal but had to be shared with the wider community of faithful in order to validate Pitirim's holiness and honor God's divine grace upon mere mortals. Similarly, Paraskeva Shilina described herself as being sinful for not reporting her miraculous cure of pleurisy after fulfilling her vow to visit the grave of Serafim Sarovskii. Clearly, she felt compelled to do so because of the preparations for Serafim's canonization.[75] Yet another lower class urban woman came forward with information about the miraculous cure of her son, Paul, in 1908 through the intercession of Ioasaf Belgorodskii only after the saint appeared before her and promised that her son would be completely healthy if she swore to the healing under oath.[76] While such miracle tales served the didactic purpose of impressing upon the faithful their duty to inform ecclesiastical authorities of miracles, the association between women and a reticence to report healings suggests that numerous women may never have gone public with their stories. They also illuminate the continuing importance of women's accounts in the modern age to the validation of saints' cults.

One last hint of women's religiosity and the effect that it had on other believers comes from pilgrimage narratives. In her discussion of the development of the Marian shrine at Lourdes in the late 19th century, Ruth Harris reminds us that "pilgrims were willing to risk death, and saw their audacity as a test that might hasten the 'resurrections' they sought."[77] However much in pain, humble pilgrims usually vowed to walk to their holy destinations. Thus, a chronically arthritic, lower-middle class woman (*meshchanka*), Aleksandra Korneeva Den'kova from the city of Riazan', walked 15 or so versts to pay her respects to the miracle-working icon of St. Nicholas at the Nikolo-Radovitsk Monastery. She

[74] RGIA, Fond 796, op. 195, No. 1449 [Kanonizatsiia Pitirima], f. 122v.

[75] "Blagodatnye znameniia prepodobnogo Serafima," 645.

[76] *Skazanie o zhizni,* 91–92.

[77] Harris, *Lourdes*, 261.

described her ordeal as such: "Going down the road with my painful legs and experiencing unbearable pain ..., you could say that I did not walk, but crawled...."[78] The sight of Den'kova and her determination would have impressed passersby as well as the monks who received her at the end of the road. A more complete picture emerges from the pen of the priest A. Goncharev. The cleric wrote an eloquent account of a paralyzed young peasant woman who joined a procession of the cross that he had organized from the parish church in Senna, Bogodukhov *uezd*, Khar'kov province, to Belgorod in the spring of 1912, several months after the glorification of St. Ioasaf. Having been paralyzed on the left side for 13 years, the 30-year-old unmarried woman insisted on walking the entire 200 versts to Ioasaf's grave, refusing to ride on a cart. According to her fellow pilgrims, she sought ultimate redemption through death, but only after being able to visit the saint's grave and take communion there. "I do not wish to be healed," she is reported as saying. "I am already old and besides will be a parasite on my parents; I would be so happy if God helped me to get to Belgorod, to prostrate myself before the relics of God's saint, [and] to sob out my grief before him, and having [the opportunity to] take communion, even if I were to die, I would be happy." Ultimately, the pilgrim did reach the relics and died on the journey home.[79] Goncharev and his fellow pilgrims had been so moved by the woman's humility, faith in God, and quest for redemption that the priest felt compelled to write an article for the religious press about the girl's story.

The stories of Abbess Taisiia and a Smolensk shrieker as well as the experiences of other devout women those narratives have evoked have presented a window unto a larger story of women's spirituality in late 18th- and 19th-century Russia. They demonstrate ways in which Russian Orthodoxy was relevant to women's lives as well as the ways in which Orthodoxy empowered women. By serving God and the larger society with extreme piety and social services, women religious gained authority by following Orthodoxy's privileging of "the monastic or 'angelic' path to salvation."[80] As widows or young single women they could abandon family cares to found or enter already established communities of like-

[78] Quoted in Poplavskaia, *Palomnichestvo*, 30.

[79] Goncharev, "Palomnichestvo," 279, 793–794.

[80] Meehan, "To Save Oneself," 121.

minded women, serving as models of extreme piety and exemplars of charitable acts. At the same time, God's grace and mercy and his ultimate gift of *umilenie* were not limited to individuals who had taken up monastic orders or copied the rigors of monastic life. Ordinary peasant women who experienced difficulties in their lives could also have their lives transformed. Women who believed themselves to be possessed were not abandoned by the church to the care of medical doctors but were accorded attention and treatment through public exorcisms often through the mediation of saints' prayers. While exorcisms confirmed the patriarchal order with male priests and monks restoring control to a woman's soul and body, the miraculous cures empowered women within their communities. Being able to leave family responsibilities behind temporarily in order to secure spiritual help at monasteries provided these women with the solace that they needed. Pilgrimages to nearby and far away monasteries beckoned both sick and well women. The much needed respite as well as spiritual renewal they experienced on their travels allowed them to return to their daily burdens and to carry them out in accordance with the dictates of a Christian society that also periodically allowed them to defy patriarchal authority within their own homes. The tenacity with which women clung to Orthodox practices in the early Soviet period when religion came under attack and the feminization that resulted thereafter can only be understood by further exploring avenues of women's spirituality in the 19th century during Orthodoxy's great revival.

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REDISCOVERING THE ORTHODOX PAST: THE MICROHISTORICAL APPROACH TO RELIGIOUS PRACTICE IN IMPERIAL RUSSIA*

Gregory L. Freeze

Serious scholarly research on religious history in general and on Russian Orthodoxy in particular is still in its infancy. While prerevolutionary scholars did make some creditable contributions (chiefly in the sphere of source publication and institutional history, narrowly defined), they had hardly begun to tap the rich reservoirs of archival and printed resources. In part, this neglect was due to the Church's jealous monopoly over archives and its predictable reluctance to expose these materials to use by muckraking scholars, especially secular historians.[1] But a good share of the blame rests with the historians, who took little interest in modern religious history, in large measure because of religious indifference, a condescension toward the "superstitious" masses, and a visceral belief in

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* This article originally appeared in Russian: Friz [Freeze], "Otkryvaia zanovo pravoslavnoe proshloe," and appears here with permission.

[1] To be sure, the Russian Orthodox Church sought to refute criticism of restricted access; see, for example, its press rejoinder to criticism in *Rech'* (no. 168: 22 June 1912), claiming that all researchers were in fact admitted to the archive (RGIA, Fond 797, opis' 82, otdel 2, stol 3, number 339, folium 1). In fact, of course, access was restricted; even the scholarship of researchers from the ecclesiastical domain was subject to close scrutiny and censorship.

Tapestry of Russian Christianity: Studies in History and Culture. Nickolas Lupinin, Donald Ostrowski and Jennifer B. Spock, eds. Columbus, Ohio: Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures and the Resource Center for Medieval Slavic Studies, The Ohio State University, 2016, 391–432.

an inexorable secularization that would gradually efface the folk's vestigial darkness. Even this modest level of research ended in 1917: apart from antireligious potboilers in the twenties, Soviet scholarship ignored religion (with a slight dispensation for the "anti-feudal" Old Believers).[2] Only in the last decade have scholars, in Russia and abroad, seriously engaged ecclesiastical and religious history.[3] Given the poverty of prior scholarship, one might be tempted to conclude that almost *any* research would make a positive contribution. The qualifier "almost" is necessary, since some research in fact has added little—either because it is redundant or because it makes merely decorative use of printed and, especially, archival sources. Perhaps the most depressing example of redundancy is the deluge of repetitive works about Soviet repression of the Church,[4] the aim being not to analyze religious history, but to demonize Bolsheviks and to canonize (literally) believers as martyrs. Even the better scholarship tends to concentrate on Bolsheviks, not believers, and zealously demonstrates how profoundly the Bolsheviks despised and destroyed the Church and its adherents—which is hardly breaking news. Nevertheless, some historians—in Russia and abroad—have finally begun to explore important, but neglected areas such as monasticism, missions, and popular Orthodoxy.

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[2] The obvious exception is the "Pokrovskii school"—those highly productive scholars trained and gathered around N. N. Pokrovskii in Novosibirsk, with diverse and original works on the Old Belief and, to a lesser extent, Russian Orthodoxy. A few other works might also be cited, such as the historical study by an anthropologist, Nosova, "Bytovoe pravoslavie."

[3] Apart from a plethora of local studies, antiquarian and mindless summaries that Hayden White would dismissively categorize as an "archival report" (*Metahistory*, ix), there have been some substantial studies at the diocesan, city, and biographical level, including: Nosova, "Bytovoe pravoslavie"; Spasenkova, "Pravoslavnaia traditsiia"; Dixon, "Church, State and Society"; Chulos, *Converging Worlds*; Shevzov, *Russian Orthodoxy*; and Kizenko, *A Prodigal Saint*. Compared with European and American historiography, however, research is still relatively modest in empirical, comparative, and theoretical terms. Alas, even when local repositories are used, the research tends to follow traditional lines of ecclesiastical history, to replicate earlier scholarship, and to forego the opportunity to exploit new questions or to pose old ones in new ways in the light of new sources. For example, see Rimskii, *Pravoslavnaia tserkov'*.

[4] Throughout, this text makes a sharp distinction between the "Church" (national institution) and the "church" (the nuclear parish unit, coterminous with the parish community of believers).

Perhaps most encouraging of all, even stalwart secular historians—who for decades denied the significance of religion and simply ignored this dimension—have come to include chapters and sections on religious and ecclesiastical life. Most historians, even if not engaged in research on ecclesiastical or religious history, would now concur that such research is not esoteric but essential for a proper understanding of both the imperial and Soviet periods.[5]

While this research has been quantitatively massive and thematically innovative, it has been less resourceful in conceptual and methodological terms. Apart from the general failure to employ new approaches (especially anthropology, sociology, and postmodernist textual analysis) and to frame the research comparatively, recent historiography on religious history has generally been disappointing in strictly empirical terms: it has failed to make substantial, critical use of the abundant sources (especially archival). Quite apart from a superficial empirical research, rarely have historians deconstructed and historicized their sources—in particular, by rethinking the structure and limitations of the existing (and now accessible) repositories. Archives are not fountains of divine truth, but the skeletal remains of defunct institutions; it is as important to understand their limitations as it is to use them.[6]

Western historiography has, over the last decades, long since recognized the need to shift from national (or meta-) historical frameworks and to explore more manageable, concrete units—be they regional, community, or biographical. Whether from a distrust

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[5] For an assessment of new research on Russian Orthodoxy, see Freeze, "Recent Scholarship," 269–278. See also the overview by Engelstein, "Holy Russia in Modern Times," 129–156.

[6] The need for a critical deconstruction of archives and for greater use of oblast and city repositories has informed recent Russian scholarship, reflected in the profusion of provincial monographs and dissertations, but also in thoughtful, sophisticated work on the use of such local courses. See, for example: Luehrmann, *Religion in Secular Archives;* Liurman, "Chto my mozhem znat'"; Mitrokhin, "Bolezn'"; and Mitrokhin, "V poiskakh." On a general theoretical level, see the informed discussion in Blouin and Rosenberg, *Processing the Past.* It must be said, however, that comparable historicization of Russian archives is making slow progress; even conferences and collections emphasizing the importance of provincial archives for the study of Russian church history do little more than list and describe materials rather than historicize their collection, structure, and preservation. See Afanas'ev, *Arkhivy.*

of theoretical constructs of the social sciences, a determination to address significant issues at a "real" level, or a desire to produce more engaging forms of narrative, historians have shown less interest in synthesis than in the singular. That interest in the particular is hardly new; antiquarianism, in ecclesiastical or secular history, has long been extant. But the "new local history"—sometimes lumped under the slippery, diffuse term "microhistory"—differs fundamentally from its forebears, partly because of a professionalization of the field, more recently because of the influence of postmodernist challenges to the earlier historiography. The fundamental objective is to extract a lot from a little, not a little about a lot; the capacity for autonomous generalization (whereby the historian, not some bureaucratic intermediary writing a summary report) presupposes use of the original, undigested data and reports that ultimately found a dim, even distorted, reflection in the documentation at higher levels in a given institution. This new approach has generated a plethora of path-breaking microhistorical studies, not by antiquarians seeking to discover the local past and its glories, but by prominent professional historians. Underlying this scholarship is a growing body of theoretical literature, delineating the opportunities—and the limitations—to microhistory.[7] Although the recent fashion in "transnational" and "global" history has disposed some to dismiss microhistory as "arcane" and "antiquarian," most historians recognize complementarity—the fruitfulness of combining the big and the small, the macro and the micro, the intimate stories and the larger narratives in the study of history."[8]

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[7] For critical, extended discussions of the new local history, see: Brown, "Microhistory and the Post-modernist Challenge," 1–19; Peltonen, "Clues, Margins, and Monads," 347–359; Levi, "On Micro-History," 97–119; Lepore, "Historians Who Love Too Much," 129–144; Schulze, *Sozialgeschichte*; Richardson, *Changing Face*; Raftis, "British Historiography Decentralizes," 143–151; Amato, *Rethinking Home*; Ginzburg, "Microhistory," 10–35; Schlumbom, *Mikrogeschichte*; Muir and Ruggiero, *Microhistory*; Dülmen, *Historische Anthropologie*; Medick, *Weben und Überleben*; Kuehn, "Reading Microhistory," 512–534; and Carroll, "Reflections on Regionalism," 120–131.

[8] Aslanian, "How Size Matters." For spirited defense of microhistory and elucidation of its importance, see: Magnússon and Szijártó, *What Is Microhistory?*; Trivellato, "Is There a Future"; and, Szijártó, "Four Arguments for Microhistory."

This paper will argue for the need to "de-imperialize" Russian Church history and to conduct intensive, local studies. It is not merely because of the obvious need to go beyond the capitals (Petersburg was no more Russia than Paris was France), but critically to assess the epistemological basis of our research, especially archival. While the need for local studies is self-evident when materials exist *only* in diocesan archives,[9] the argument here is that it applies no less to spheres where the holdings in central archives are voluminous and seemingly inclusive. It is essential, given the provenance and structure of the sources, for religious history to be written from the bottom up (literally, not nominally) and to draw heavily on local repositories—that is, oblast and city archives, along with a host of other unofficial, decentralized collections (personal *fondy*, library manuscript holdings, and the like). Such research can not only augment, but fundamentally reshape, the conclusions constructed on the basis of files in central repositories. In conceptual terms, it is important to recognize that the "Imperial Church" is a social construction, an analytical imaginary, something that elites strove to reify institutionally, but which parishioners vigorously contested, evaded, and ignored. Despite the systematic attempt by the post-Petrine Church to usurp the traditional prerogatives of the parish, believers—especially from the mid-19th century—tenaciously battled to reassert their rights and will. Power gravitated downward; to understand power and politics in the Church, it is essential to shift attention from the center to the periphery. While one should not ignore the center (both its policies and its documentation—massive, well preserved, and systematized for easy access), it is essential to conduct the kind of grassroots research that has long dominated modern scholarship on ecclesiastical and religious scholarship in the West.[10]

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[9] Thus, whereas the Synod has the *formuliarnye spiski* (service records) of clerical elites (bishops and abbots), one must turn to diocesan repositories for analogous information about the parish clergy and rank-and-file monastic clergy—in the *klirovye vedomosti* (parish staff records) of white clergy and the annual reports on monks and nuns. For the monastic records, see typical files for Vladimir diocese with data on age, education, social and geographic origin, and date of tonsure, in GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, Nos. 4428, 4425, 4215, and 4426.

[10] Although the focus here is on central and diocesan archives, similar differences pertain to printed sources, especially the ecclesiastical and secular provincial press, both central and local. Apart from the well-known

After first historicizing the institutional development and hence structure of archival repositories, this paper will examine three cases (of many) to show how the use of diocesan archives can not only supplement, but substantially change our database, our methodology, and ultimately our conclusions: 1) confession and communion statistics; 2) ecclesiastical reports about popular religiosity; and, 3) divorce cases. While scholars have used central archives to elucidate these matters, it is important to see how the use of local repositories dramatically changes, not merely enhances, our understanding.

Historicizing Church Archives

To begin with, historians should rethink the applicability of such notions as "institution," especially with respect to Russian Orthodoxy. "Institution" itself is an alien abstraction, borrowed from Western sociology and long lacking a clear linguistic analogue in Russian language and social thought. Significantly, even the progenitor of this conception—Western sociology—has of late come to realize how deficient, even misleading, this term has come to be, referring simultaneously to a broad range of diverse phenomena (from corporate organizations to normative customs) with wide variations in

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(but little-used) diocesan gazettes (*eparkhial'nye vedomosti*) that began to appear from 1860, it is important to tap as well the local secular press. Above all, that includes the non-ecclesiastical local newspapers and journals that increased so rapidly in the late 19th and early 20th century. This local press contains a wealth of ground-level reports that significantly complement the files in Church archives. In Vladimir diocese, for example, local newspapers like *Vladimirskii listok* and *Staryi vladimirets* regularly included much about religious and Church affairs. For example, *Staryi vladimirets* reported about a radical priest in Kursk diocese (11 February 1910), clerical protests against plans for a public dance during Lent (3 March 1910), relative quiet during carnival (6 March 1910), and results of a recent diocesan assembly (9 March 1910). The local papers also included a fair share of anticlerical reports, for example, complaints about priests who rush pell-mell through the liturgy ("Golos mirian," *Ivanovskii listok,* 1911, no. 60 [18 March]:3) and disorders in a monastery ("V monastyre," *Staryi vladimirets,* 1913, no. 203 [17 September]:3). But the local papers also published very interesting accounts of religious life, such as processions and pilgrimages (for example, "Krestnyi khod," *Ivanovskii listok,* 1911, no. 145 [10 July]:2, and "Khronika," *Vladimirskii listok,* 1913, no. 19 [26 May]:1) and miraculous healings ("Istselenie bol'noi poslushnitsy v Skorbiaschenskom monastyre," *Ivanovskii listok,* 1911, no. 16 [22 January]:1).

their structure, purpose, and powers. Worse still, the term "institution" often becomes ahistorical, with continuities and consistencies concealing the processes of change and differentiation within a single "institution."

These same qualifications apply to the Russian Orthodox Church as an "institution." In fact, it lacks the presumed static features of an institution, as it underwent profound changes in its formal structure, property and assets, and allocation of operational power. The Imperial Church certainly did evince the strains toward (and from) standardization and centralization, but that process of institution-building was incremental, incomplete, and uneven; contested by lay parishioners, it was ultimately undone by the Bolsheviks.[11] What St. Petersburg decreed *was* important, but its wishes did not invariably (even often) become grassroots reality. To be sure, from the mid-18th century, the ecclesiastical authorities in St. Petersburg (initially the Synod, later the chief procurator) sought to centralize ecclesiastical power and to standardize religious practice, but that was a slow, difficult undertaking—all the more for an organization now bereft of its landed wealth (after 1764) and charged with administering a realm so vast, so dispersed, and so diverse.

Nor was the process unilinear: from the mid-19th century the Imperial Church began to undergo countervailing, "deinstitutionalizing" processes. In that sense, the turning point in the modern history of Russian Orthodoxy was not 1917 but 1850: hitherto church authorities had gradually expanded their control over parish life, but henceforth they gradually relinquished, or forfeited, their control over popular religious life. If in 1850 the episcopate controlled clerical appointments, supervised parish churches, siphoned off their candle revenues, and tightly regulated such matters as marriage and divorce, they gradually relinquished this power in succeeding decades. By the final decades of the *ancien régime*, its administration proved too small—and resistance too great—to manage religious life and institutions at the base. When the Bolsheviks disestablished the church in 1917–1918 and transferred "all power to the parish," they essentially completed and codified a process already long at work.

[11] See Freeze, "Von der Entkirchlich ung zur Laisierung"; and Freeze, "Vsia vlast' prikhodam."

There were several principal reasons for this dismantling of ecclesiastical power. One was ideological: it correlated with similar processes elsewhere in society, specifically, the decentralization and empowerment of local society to address, and effectively to resolve, local needs. As in the case of state administration, clergy—even conservative bishops—came increasingly to favor proposals to transfer authority from St. Petersburg to the diocese and to construct a far more decentralized administration based on regional units (metropolitanates), with greater autonomy at the diocesan level as well. While the goal was partly to increase efficiency and to be more flexible in dealing with local problems, these proposals derived principally from a desire to liberate the church from state tutelage—reified in the personae of chief procurators like D. A. Tolstoi and K. P. Pobedonostsev. That impulse, ever present, gained momentum from the mid-19th century but became particularly powerful after the manifesto on freedom of religious confession in April 1905.

A second factor was the desire to tap into the wellspring of popular Orthodoxy—that is, to revive the parish and lay participation. The motives for such "parish empowerment" were diverse: some sought to mobilize the laity against an incipient de-Christianization, others envisioned an opportunity to reassert Orthodoxy's role in secular affairs (through the "parish commune").[12] But still more important in driving such ideas was pressure from below: in the post-reform era, the laity came increasingly to contest ecclesiastical policy and power, to reassert their traditional prerogatives. Although church authorities fought such "usurpation," they increasingly had to contend with attempts by the laity to choose their local clergy,[13] to restructure and especially to reduce

[12] Freeze, "All Power to the Parish?" 174–208.

[13] Although the Church did not formally concede the right of parishioners to select their clergy until 1917 (which was then substantially withdrawn by the Church Council [*sobor*] in 1918), the issue was widely discussed in the press and various Church commissions. Even without a formal concession, the parishioners began to exert pressure by resorting to accusations—grounded or false—to rid themselves of unwanted clerics. For a typical complaint, see the petition from parishioners in August 1904 to the Lithuanian consistory. See LVIA, Fond 605, op. 9, No. 741, folia 176–204v. The increase in such complaints provoked concern, especially among the clergy, and impelled the clerical assembly of the Lithuanian diocese to ask the bishop to proceed warily before authorizing a full-scale, humiliating criminal investigation. See LVIA, Fond 605, op/ 9, No. 1724, ff. 105–106.

financial support for the clergy,[14] to regulate local religious practice,[15] and to control the expenditure of parish funds.[16] As the Church engaged in protracted (and fruitless) debates about "parish reform" in the early 20th century, virtually the entire discussion concerned how, and to what degree, the Church should recognize lay power in these critical matters.

A third dynamic driving deinstitutionalization was the growing gap between ecclesiastical resources and goals: the Church simply lacked the human and financial resources to expand its administrative apparatus to keep pace with the demographic, social, and cultural changes overtaking late Imperial Russia. The sheer rate of demographic growth outdistanced the expansion of ecclesiastical administration, as the ratio of parishioners to ecclesiastical administration inexorably increased, especially at the diocesan level. As the massive, complex protocols and journals of the Synod and diocesan consistories make clear, the Church faced an administrative task of mind-boggling complexity, their small and underfinanced staff being charged with a vast array of obligations, from conducting divorce trials to managing an immense physical plant (including not only churches and lands, but also various pieces of commercial real estate).[17] The accelerating pace of social changes

[14] For example, see the case in Vladimir diocese in 1905 where the parishioners adopted a resolution to reduce the gratuities paid to the clergy —to the latter's predictable dismay. See GAVO, Fond 556, op. 111, No. 1111, ff. 387–388v [consistory journal of 14 December 1905]).

[15] Most important was the Church's acquiescence, begrudging at the central level, to the canonization of local saints in the final decades of the *ancien régime*. See the discussion and references in Freeze, "Subversive Piety," 307–350.

[16] The "parish question"—reestablishment of the laity's right to choose priests and to control parish resources—was a central focus of reform discourse in the early 20th century. For the Church's recognition of the need to resuscitate the "parish community" but its abiding ambivalence toward empowering the "dark masses," see the discussions that followed a synodal invitation on 18 November 1905 to discuss the issue—as, for instance, in *Sobranie dukhovenstva i tserkovnykh starost tserkvei g. Arkhangel'ska po voprosu ob ustroenii prikhodskoi zhizni* (Arkhangel'sk, 1906), 9–12; TsDIAK Ukrainy, Fond 127, op. 1003, g. 1906, No. 8; DAZhO, Fond 1, op. 33, No. 2501, ff. 5, 7.

[17] For example, the protocols of the Lithuanian consistory in the 1890s reveal how much time it had to devote to handling financial matters, overseeing construction projects, leasing land, selling timber from Church-owned forests, establishing new parishes, administering gifts and donations, and the like (LVIA, Fond 605, op. 9, Nos. 327 and 444).

associated with industrialization and urbanization proved no less taxing; with the ever growing numbers of uprooted and unregulated departing the village, with the reverse intrusion of urban culture through migrant labor and universal military conscription, the Church quite naturally faced the impossible task of tracking and teaching a mobile, acculturating flock. Indeed, it feared both de-Christianization and re-Christianization, with intense and mounting changes from the Old Belief, sectarianism, and recantation of those previously—voluntarily or otherwise—converted to Orthodoxy from other confessions.

This "re-localization" of power from the center to periphery had two significant implications for the structure of archival repositories. First, in sheer quantitative terms, the center of gravity in documentation shifted downwards: although the absolute volume of documentation sent to the center increased, the relative share sharply contracted, with St. Petersburg receiving a dwindling proportion of total paperwork. As bishops ruled and parishes resisted, as the rationale and politics of decentralization gained ascendancy, an increasing proportion of decision-making came at the diocesan and indeed parish level. Moreover, the sheer increase in the magnitude of ecclesiastical administration mandated "filtering"—to reduce the quantity of documents sent to St. Petersburg and, no less important, to homogenize and to simplify their content. Petersburg authorities obtained more and better documentation, but that very growth entailed significant distorting elements: the need for annual reports to process, tabulate, and summarize required that the information be aggregated, generalized, and abstracted. As power devolved downward, the documentation to St. Petersburg became more formulaic and uniform, belying the vast complexity and kaleidoscopic diversity of diocesan, district, and parish realities. That growing disparity between central and local documentation (and its implications for historical research) is apparent in three quite different types of sources: 1) the statistics on confession and communion; 2) clerical reports about religiosity; and 3) records on marital breakdown and divorce.

The Statistics on Confession and Communion

In an effort to quantify and measure "religiosity," European historians utilize a number of indices—none of which is perfect, but which collectively provide some measure of the intensity and forms of popular piety. Recruitment to holy orders (reflecting geographic and social affiliation with the Church), material contributions (amounts, types, sources, targets, geographic distribution), records

on church attendance, and data on confession and communion—such are some of the statistical measures used to determine whether the flock (and which flocks) were willing to pray and pay. These quantitative indicators, to be sure, are a very imperfect measure: not only are the records incomplete and inaccurate, but they tend to measure conformity more than conviction, to equate public with private piety, to privilege institutional over informal observance, and to conflate activists and conformists into a single category of "believer." Nevertheless, these different indicators do provide a useful index of popular recognition of organized religion, with decreases—or increases—providing insight into the fortunes of a particular church. The data on confession and communion, in particular, constitute a key statistical indicator in the historical sociology of religious life in Western Europe.

The Russian Orthodox Church did not record, much less assemble in St. Petersburg, such data until the 18th century. The initial impulse came under Peter the Great (principally to identify and tax dissenters), but decades would pass before priests recorded and bishops collected these reports. By the 1770s, diocesan and central Church authorities were systematically collating and summarizing these data, and they would continue to do so until the end of the *ancien régime*. The reports, moreover, included more than the mere numbers of those who performed, or omitted, their duty to make confession and receive communion. Using the nominal lists filed by parish priests after the annual Easter services,[18] diocesan officials compiled elaborate tables on the patterns of religious observance. These tables, which were subsequently sent to St. Petersburg, included several variables: geography (city and district), gender, social estate; and type of observance—full compliance (confession and communion), confession only, and noncompliance (because of young age, excused absence, and "lack of zeal" [*neradenie*]). The reports also included, as a separate category, any registered Old Believers residing in the parish.

The data on confession and communion are a valuable indicator, but hardly represent a perfect measure of religious practice, much less "piety." The compilation of the lists itself was fraught with

[18] In the late 1730s, for the first and last time, the Synod ordered copies of the nominal lists, not mere statistical summaries; once the tons of documentation from tens of thousands of parishes began flooding into St. Petersburg, authorities realized the folly of such a demand and thereafter sought only to acquire a numerical summary. See Mironov, "Ispovednye vedomosti" 102–117.

difficulty, especially in large parishes; given the pressure to hear confession and dispense the Holy Elements to communicants, the priest inevitably had to compile the lists later—from memory. Although the priest was likely to recall the few who failed to appear, errors were inevitable. More problematic is the honesty of compiling lists: the noncompliant, especially Old Believers, had a strong incentive to evade detection—including the special taxes that such exposure entailed.[19] While fear of ascription to the Old Belief, with attendant fines, disappeared in 1800 for Old Believers and in 1801 for negligent Orthodox, believers still were under some compulsion to perform this duty until mid-1851: in exceptional cases (where they omitted the duty for several consecutive years), they were subjected to public penance (in rare cases even entailing a few weeks incarceration in a monastery). While such coercion was extraordinarily rare, far more significant no doubt was pressure from the family or community to comply. In that sense, the statistics on confession and communion record only observance, not the degree of fervor or belief. But even that statistic is revealing, for the sheer willingness to conform is a measure of acceptance and acquiescence—an index that plummeted rapidly in Western Europe, especially from the mid-19th century, but one that remained astronomically high by European standards.

Hence the massive tables in the Synodal archive are of considerable interest and value.[20] Above all, they provide a rough map to the patterns of religious observance and how these changed from the late 18th century to World War I. Most importantly, they show an astonishingly high level of religious observance—close to 90 percent;[21] despite signs of religious "indifference" (the percentage of "unzealous" rose), the percentage of believers who confessed and received communion was exceedingly high, especially when compared with the withering figures of 10 to 20 percent reported by the Western Churches.[22] Moreover, these tables show

[19] Metropolitan Platon of Moscow attributed inaccurate reports specifically to the attempt to conceal Old Believers and therefore prescribed stiff fines and even dismissal for clergy found guilty of collaborating with them. See Rozanov, *Istoriia Moskovskogo eparkhial'nogo upravleniia*, vol. 3, pt. 1, 117–119.

[20] For a summary description, see Freeze, "Russian Orthodoxy: Church, People, and Politics."

[21] This percentage excludes children too young to make confession and receive communion, nominally deemed to be under the age of seven.

[22] Compare, for example, the figures cited for various European Churches in McLeod, *European Religion*; McLeod, *Secularization*, 171–184.

distinct regional patterns, with higher rates in the densely compacted central dioceses and in the confessionally contested western provinces, but lower rates in the sparsely-populated northern and Siberian dioceses (which were "under-churched"—with vast, sprawling parishes not easily accessed—and challenged by Old Believers and sectarians). The aggregate statistics also show a slight differential between men and women, chiefly in terms of full compliance (women ranking slightly higher) and excused absences (men being far more likely to engage in migrant labor and therefore unable to perform rites in their home parish).

Perhaps the most striking change was the disappearance of "partial observance" (i.e., those who performed confession but omitted communion) and the increase in "excused" and "unexcused nonobservance." Given the shift between the two columns, one might speculate that the semi-observant simply ceased to comply, either because of religious indifference or because of the expanding role of migrant labor in the towns and factories. The series data also show fluctuations, sometimes reflecting popular response to fear-inspiring events like war.[23] Although the data show some differences in social estate and gender, these are relatively small when compared with the geographic correlations. Region, far more than class or gender, determined the level of observance or deviance. Finally, despite some small signs of deviance, bishops could—and did—cite the statistics as proof that popular piety remained resilient, not only among the rural population, but in the cities and elites as well.

If, however, one uses diocesan and parish records, this picture changes significantly. First, the tabular data in central archives are incomplete, not only because some priests were lackadaisical and inept, but also because parish boundaries remained highly porous, especially in urban areas, making an accurate count extremely difficult. As a result, the tables—especially for urban areas—underreport deviance among migrant laborers (including the proverbially irreligious workers in factories). Hence the resident population of cities like Viatka and Kostroma significantly exceeded those netted in the annual reports on confession and communion. While these corrections do not demolish the picture of relatively high

[23] The outbreak of World War I, for example, triggered not only patriotic but pious upsurges; see, for example, the report from deans in Vladimir diocese in GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, No. 4955, ff. 45–46, 49, 56, 67, 90–94, 96. The same is true of Lithuanian deaneries; see LVIA, Fond 605, op. 9, No. 1924, ff. 8, 21, 43, 45, 61, 69.

rates of religious observance (especially when compared with European Churches), they do reduce the gap, especially in the most industrializing and urbanizing segments of imperial society.[24]

Second, the parish-level summaries reveal a pattern of observance far more complex than that suggested by the Synodal tables based on diocesan units, with neat subcategories of "city" and "district." In effect, it was the official structure of arbitrary administrative units, not the data, that underlay the statistical map of the official structure of religious observance. That aggregation necessarily distorts the totals for a given unit, at once concealing the myriad complexity in each area and producing an artificial "average" for a given geographic unit. Where some parishes were massively observant, others were equally nonobservant. Thus these tables—aggregated on the basis of artificial administrative boundaries—cannot generate a meaningful religious cartography, indicating "hot" and "cold" spots that overlap and defiantly traverse the formal administrative boundaries. No less important, these averages do not capture the kaleidoscopic variability *within* a particular district, where a host of factors—not only religious fervor, but also the presence of other confessions, the zeal and veneration of the priest, even the vagaries of weather and accessibility during the spring thaws—directly affected rates of observance. Thus, even in a single district, observance ranged sharply—from total compliance to massive deviance. In short, the diocesan and district "averages"—crammed into artificial administrative units—conceal the particularism endemic in this belatedly modernizing, secularizing, society.[25]

Finally, only the nominal lists (the confessional lists, *ispovednye rospisi*) in diocesan and parish repositories allow one to decode the reality behind the numbers. Above all, these lists add an important variable lacking in the diocesan totals: age. Apart from correlating rates of observance and deviance with age, these records shed light on the substantial proportion of individuals who made confession but did not receive communion. The nominal lists in many

[24] On the other hand, clergy in St. Petersburg argued that the rates of actual observance were higher than those recorded in official statistics, chiefly because the priest simply failed to record communicants who were not formally registered in his parish (RGIA, Fond 796, op. 442, No. 2598, f. 69, quoted in the metropolitan's report for 1913).

[25] For a case study of these complex variations within Vladimir diocese (including an official diocesan study attempting to make sense of this diversity), see Freeze, "Pious Folk?"

parishes included those who failed to receive communion because of indifference, but also many (sometimes the overwhelming majority) who did so "upon the counsel of their spiritual father." Although such behavior invites various speculative interpretations (in particular, the willingness of semi-dissenters [*polu-raskol'niki*] to make the pro forma confession, but not to receive communion), in rural parishes deviance correlates closely with age and marital status: it was principally younger couples who, "upon the advice of their spiritual father," refrained from taking communion—in all likelihood, because they had violated the rule to abstain from sexual intercourse during Lent.[26] And, above all, the nominal lists showing semi-observance record lay religious observance in all its glorious heterogeneity: some parishes have full compliance, others numerous semi-observers because of "indifference" and "upon the counsel of the spiritual father," in wildly varying proportions.[27]

In the second half of the 19th century the phenomenon of "semi-observance" virtually disappeared. In some measure, that reflected Church policy: already from the 1830s, the Synod enjoined priests to discourage parishioners from semi-observance, arguing

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[26] Bishop Leonid of Kostroma, in a report from in 1853, explained the phenomenon of semi-observance as due "solely to their awareness of their unworthiness and because of the difficulty of performing, especially in younger years, all the conditions to be worthy of receiving [the Holy Elements]." RGIA, Fond 797, op. 22, otdel 1, st. 2, No. 241, f. 30. See the similar observations by the bishop of Penza in his report for 1850 in RGIA, Fond 132, g. 1851, No. 2363, ff. 177v–178. The link between nonobservance "upon the counsel of the spiritual father" and age (married youths between twenty and thirty years of age) is particularly evident in the nominal lists; see the 1750 lists for Suzdal' in GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, No. 61.

[27] The nominal lists for Suzdal' okrug in 1755, for example, have few parishes with semi-observants, but one had approximately 139 (of 1225 parishioners). GAVO, Fond 556, op. 111, No. 7, ff. 19–38. A century later, such heterogeneity still prevailed. See, for example, the 1845 lists from Vladimir, where one parish (with 975 parishioners), had 655 full compliants, 301 semi-compliants ("upon the counsel of the spiritual father"), nine with excused absences, 18 unexcused, and two listed as Old Believers. Another parish had 293 semi-observants, where five omitted communion at the priest's recommendation and the rest because of "indifference." Another parish reported a balance between those omitting communion because of the priest's recommendation (123) and those who had no excuse (81). In another parish the balance was reversed: of 428 semi-observants, 331 did so because of "indifference" and 98 because of the priest's counsel. GAVO, Fond 556, op. 111, No. 491, ff. 1–228.

that full observance was preferable and exclusion from communion to be imposed in only rare cases.[28] Hence ecclesiastical policy, together with absenteeism (associated with migrant labor and trade) and religious "indifference,"[29] significantly increased the proportion of those who did not either make confession or receive communion. Among men, for example, this proportion rose from 2.76 percent (1797) to 12.45 percent (1900), with the "unzealous" the larger share (6.69 percent). The data show, significantly, not only the continuance of an extraordinarily high level of observance, but also the emergence of a small, yet substantial, minority of those who openly rejected their "Christian duties." As one should expect, Russian society was clearly in the midst of growing religious differentiation, the spectrum of "activists," "conformists," and "dissenters" becoming ever more clearly defined.

Reports (*Otchety*) on Popular Religiosity

From the Petrine reforms and, especially, from the mid-19th century, central authorities sought to obtain diocesan reports about the level of popular belief. Emulating the example of the Western Churches, the Russian Church required bishops to conduct visitations, assemble various data, and submit annual reports. Although the Church periodically campaigned to obtain such reports from the early 18th century, it was only from the late 1840s that the Church finally emulated the example of state administration (which, since 1810, required annual, standardized reports from provincial governors).[30] That impulse derived mainly from the government, which demanded that the Church assemble and publish annual reports, as the ministries were doing in the secular domain; to facilitate

[28] RGIA, Fond 796, op. 113, g. 1832, No. 1837, ff. 1–150; *PSZ (2),* 7:5971 (Synodal decree of 10 February 1833).

[29] The term "indifference" (*neradenie*) can include both the irreligious and dissenters: Old Believers and sectarians who, as the regime relaxed repression, felt less compulsion to conform and mask their deviance. In reality, then, the correct term is probably "dissent," encompassing both types, but for the sake of convenience the terms "indifference" and "indifferent" are employed here.

[30] In November 1844, the Synod approved the standard format for the annual reports, after complaining about the heterogeneity in diocesan reports. It finally used the new format in October 1847, with the requirement that the report be submitted at the first of the following year (LVIA, Fond 605, op. 9, No. 983, ff. 31–31v).

the timely processing of such data, the Synod adopted standardized forms for reporting on such matters as diocesan administration, monasteries, the parish clergy, catechization, and "the flock" (*pastva*). To be sure, not all dioceses complied, provoking repeated reprimands from St. Petersburg and causing some published annual reports to omit some dioceses from the tabular reports. In 1865, some two decades after establishing the new order, the Synod complained bitterly that the reports were not only tardy, but that some were exceedingly superficial and general.[31] In the following decades, however, the bishop (more precisely, his consistory) complied with the requirement, gradually increasing the specificity and detail in the reports.

For the period 1850–1916, these annual reports provide the single most systematic, comprehensive overview of popular piety. Whereas the earlier reports were quite perfunctory, especially with respect to popular "piety" (*blagochestie*),[32] by the early 20th century they had become far more detailed and carried some critical notes. Above all, they do reflect a growing alarm about the spiritual health of the flock. Thus the report from Novgorod affirmed that the general situation was excellent, but admitted a darker side—specifically, the "libertine spirit" (*vol'nyi dukh*) among the youths who migrated to the factory and city.[33] But it was only the Revolution of 1905–1907, with the upheavals of the "liberation movement," that brought a far more somber, at times deeply alarmist, picture of the "moral-religious conditions" of the folk. Not surprisingly, these reports from the inter-revolutionary years (1907–1916) attracted considerable interest from Soviet historians bent on

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[31] Quoted in LVIA, Fond 605, op. 9, No. 983, ff. 31–31v. The Synod also admonished the bishops to include only pertinent materials in the report and not to raise issues that required separate files. RGIA, Fond 796, op. 146, g. 1865, No. 1458, ff. 1–5. Such directives, predictably, had limited effect; to the very end of the *ancien régime*, the Synod and chief procurator bewailed the problem of belated and incomplete replies.

[32] Typical was the assessment offered by Bishop Damaskin of Tula in his report of 1 January 1851: "In all fairness one can say that, by the mercy of God, the diocese of Tula is in every respect in a desirable condition of good order." RGIA, Fond 796, op. 132, g. 1851, No. 2357, f. 144v.

[33] RGIA, Fond 796, op. 132, g. 1851, No. 2357, f. 144v. Such generally positive assessments prevailed below as well. See, for example, the positive reports from the dean of Vyborg district in St. Petersburg in 1900, describing a religious upsurge in 1900 (TsGIA Spb., Fond 19, op. 92, g. 1900, No. 14, f. 212v).

demonstrating pervasive de-Christianization as a natural prelude to the revolutions of 1917 and post-revolutionary secularization of popular culture.[34]

Nevertheless, these reports—while a valuable source on episcopal perception and on the construction of central images of popular religious life—are a very imperfect guide to grassroots Orthodoxy. One deficiency was the sheer formalism of such reports, as bishops generalized—in a few paragraphs, at most a few pages—about religious life in a diocese with up to a million or more registered believers. Sloth also played a role: in many cases, the bishop's staff shamelessly plagiarized the report from the previous year, replacing old numbers with more recent ones, but reproducing the old text word-for-word.[35] Apart from the recurring failure of bishops to file the reports and data on time (a bane for the chief procurator who himself was responsible for publishing the annual report on time),[36] it was clear that many bishops failed to offer serious analyses of religious conditions in each's respective diocese, contenting themselves with sweeping generalities (about the piety of peasants and religious indifference of migrant laborers). In the wake of the 1905 Revolution, the chief procurator took them to task not only for the tardiness but also the formalism of the reports, demanding that they address such matters as the rise or fall of popular religiosity, list amounts of cash donations, and the like.[37] While the reports do contain much interesting data,

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[34] For typical examples, see the voluminous (and overlapping) publications of L. I. Emeliakh, such as *Istoricheskie predposylki*. Other examples include Kadson, "Otnoshenie," 208–219; Kadson, "Materialy po istorii," 204–209.

[35] For example, in the text pertaining to the laity, Archbishop Aleksei recycled the same text in 1915 that he had used the previous year. For the 1914 and 1915 reports, see RGIA, Fond 796, op. 442, No. 2628, ff. 35–36, and No. 2690, ff. 35–36.

[36] Thus, in 1909 the chief procurator complained that the situation had not improved and that the delays had forced central authorities to delay the publication of the annual report by several years. See his circular to diocesan authorities in Vil'na in LVIA, Fond 605, op. 9, No. 983, ff. 31–31v.

[37] In the Lithuanian diocese, the 1909 Synodal instruction impelled the consistory to disseminate a new, more elaborate format for the deans' reports, calling for more information in a standard form to facilitate the compilation for the annual report: LVIA, Fond 605, op. 9, No. 983, ff. 38–39.

chiefly with respect to diocesan administration and clergy,[38] they cannot—in a few spare pages—adequately characterize religious life in their vast dioceses. A few bishops did include excerpts from the local deans (*blagochinnye*), but chiefly to footnote their generalizations and not to generate a picture of the complexities, problems, and patterns of religious change.[39] In short, while historians have been eager to use and quote these "general reports" in central archives, they in fact reveal more about the bishops who wrote them than they do about believers whom they purport to describe.

By contrast, the raw materials in diocesan archives—which theoretically were to serve as the source for the annual reports—provide a far more nuanced picture of parish realities (the plural is deliberate). Of particular importance are the lower-level, biannual reports of deans (*blagochinnye*) that, in a filtered and truncated fashion, sometimes entered into the general diocesan report to the Synod. Although the Church first established the office of dean in the mid-18th century (as the bishop's agent), not until a century later did it require them to file regular reports about conditions in the deanships (usually 10 to 15 churches). These reports were a key factor in shaping diocesan policy, indicating problems and impelling bishops to issue circulars to deal with them.[40] But the annual diocesan reports to St. Petersburg made only superficial use of the voluminous memoranda from the deans; the diocesan reports remained compendia of terse generalization, rarely providing a sophisticated picture of the diversity so characteristic of popular Orthodoxy.[41]

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[38] The reports included some telling statistical data, particularly with respect to the clergy and their activities. For example, the 1914 report from Vladimir boasted that local priests (1,301) had delivered 40,129 sermons and homilies, most of which were read from printed collections (27,824), with another 3,955 impromptu and 8,350 original, written sermons: RGIA, Fond 796, op. 442, No. 2628, f. 29v.

[39] For example, the 1913 report from the bishop of Ekaterinburg quoted the report of a dean about the high religious fervor of factory workers in his district (RGIA, Fond 796, op. 442, No. 2576, f. 88–88v). The same is true of the reports for St. Petersburg (No. 2598, f. 69–69v) and Zabaikal'e (No. 2579, f. 9).

[40] For example, after receiving reports from deans that some priests were omitting vespers, the bishop of Penza issued a circular reiterating their obligation to perform this service. See Anirov, *Sbornik tsirkuliarnykh rasporiazhenii*, 33–34.

[41] In addition to the semiannual reports, the deans in some dioceses convened to discuss the needs of the Church and how to deal with them.

The biannual reports from the deans, by contrast, accent the enormous variability and volatility in popular religious life, even within a single deanship, let alone across a diocese with hundreds of parishes and hundreds of thousands of believers.[42] This heterogeneity, not standardization, characterized religious practice at the end of the *ancien régime*; the diversity emphasized in such reports demonstrates that Orthodoxy was still fundamentally "parish," notwithstanding the "imperial" construction of Church and state. Moreover, the deans' reports tend to be distinctly more concrete, candid, and sometimes alarmist—even before the Revolution of 1905–1907, emphasizing the corrosive impact of migrant labor, the assertiveness of youth, and the breakdown of traditional mores. Although deans routinely affirmed the piety of most believers,[43] they provide a far less sanguine picture than that found in the reassuring (often complacent) dispatches to St. Petersburg. Such anxiety was especially pronounced in peripheral areas where Orthodoxy was the minority faith and confessional challenges increasingly bold.[44] In the

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See, for example, the protocols of the deanship assemblies in Lithuania diocese in 1870 in LVIA, Fond 605, op. 8, No. 402.

[42] Predictably, the deans' reports vary considerably in quality and candor, ranging from the terse and formulaic to the prolix and perspicacious. In 1851, the bishop of Iaroslavl' complained that "the reports of the deans, for the most part, are too monotonous, and especially the periodic reports are almost a replication of earlier ones" (RGIA, Fond 796, op. 132, g. 1851, No. 2357, f. 108). In general, however, they tended to improve (and expand) in the last decades of the *ancien régime*. Compare, for example, the bland, superficial reports sent by the deans of Vladimir diocese in 1864 (GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, No. 2259) with those filed in 1915 (No. 4955). For a systematic source analysis of the deans' reports from Lithuania diocese, see Freeze, "Russian Orthodoxy on the Periphery," 124–131.

[43] The deans' reports from Vladimir diocese in 1895, for example, generally provide a very positive picture of popular piety and morality; only in isolated parishes did they discern problems of indifference, chiefly among the youthful and migrant laborers (GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, No. 3815). Even in 1905, many deans in St. Petersburg diocese were still reporting that the "religious-moral condition" of parishioners was good, although some began to exhibit signs of waxing anxiety. See TsGIA Spb., Fond 19, op. 97, g. 1905, Nos. 36 and 37. However, inspection reports from the same year also attest that, while the clergy perform services like vespers zealously and deliver homilies, "the parishioners are not especially zealous in attending" (No. 35, f. 12).

[44] For Vladimir diocese, see GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, No. 3815, ff. 1–141 (1895) and No. 3285 (1885). For the deans' reports in Volhynia in 1906, see DAZhO, Fond 1, op. 34, No. 1908, ff. 1–303.

wake of 1905, when alarmist warnings pervaded even a bishop's annual report to St. Petersburg, the deans' biannual reports provided a more differentiated picture, not only in spatial but temporal terms, emphasizing patterns of religious revival as well as dissent and indifference. The deans' report from Vladimir in the first half of 1909, for example, posited the basic piety of parishioners, but also confirmed that they had become less "zealous" with respect to their church and religious duties.[45] But more striking than this perceived decline was the enormous variability, even in a single deanship, with religiosity ranging from white-hot fervor in some parishes to rampant de-Christianization (or "re-Christianization" as Old Believers or sectarians) in others.[46] This heterogeneity reflected the great variability in parish religiosity, a variability that underlay the kaleidoscopic differences in contemporary ethnographic reports, like those in the Tenishev collection in the Russian Ethnographic Museum.[47]

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[45] Thus, in 1909 one dean (III *okrug*, Aleksandrov *uezd*) reported that the parishioners "have become less zealous toward the divine church: they come more rarely and in fewer numbers to the church, and have become less respectful toward the needs of their pastors—they have come to treat them coldly, attempt to reduce the fees for rites (formerly they gave rye but have now ceased to do so), causing the clergy to become terribly poor amidst the current rise in the cost of all food products and the decreased harvest of grain": GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, No. 4719, unpaginated. Nor did the picture improve in succeeding years. In 1914, for example, one dean (III *okrug*, Iurev-Pol'skii *uezd*) wrote that "the parishioners are all Orthodox (there being neither Old Believers nor sectarians in the district), but the people's former zeal for the divine church has ceased to exist," with many neglecting their religious duties (GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, No. 4883, f. 3). But others painted a more positive picture (for example, the dean of the IV *okrug*, Suzdal' *uezd*, in ibid., f. 37–37v).

[46] For example, the visitation reports for St. Petersburg diocese in 1905 reveal that the "parishioners come to services zealously" in one parish, attend "rather zealously" in another, but rarely appear in others. See LGIA, Fond 19, op. 97, g. 1905, No. 35, ff. 12, 20, 51, 107v.

[47] Russkii etnograficheskii muzei, Fond 7 (Tenishev). Differing, even diametrically opposed assessments routinely emanated from the same diocese, reflecting not only the authors' personal biases, but also the heterogeneity of religious practice. Compare, for example, the reports from the provinces of Viatka (e.g., op. 1, No. 433, f. 15 and No. 441, f. 2); Kaluga (No. 540, f. 1 and No. 495, ff. 1–8); Kostroma (No. 572, ff. 1, 11–11v and No. 595, ff. 13, 28); and Novgorod (No. 782, ff. 1–18 and No. 750, f. 8). For a published edition of the responses from Vladimir diocese, see Firsov and Kiseleva, *Byt velikorusskikh krest'ian-zemlepashtsev*.

To the deans' reports must be added the other documentation found in diocesan archives that reached the Synod, if at all, in a highly abstracted, filtered form.[48] Thus, rich and revealing detail abounds in the diocesan files on specific issues for which the Synod had solicited a special report. In such cases the Synodal archive preserves the final, neatly written (or, later, typed) formal submission, usually without any indication of how the bishop had compiled the document. The diocesan files, by contrast, can show the process of its compilation: whether the report was generated by the prelate himself, personal aides, the consistory, or a special commission of diocesan clergy. The diocesan files, moreover, may include the underlying (and unreported) data, deliberations, and disagreements that vanished as the report underwent

[48] This principle applies, without question, to the other kinds of information that the bishop assembled for his regular reports to St. Petersburg—for example, the clergy's service files (*klirovye vedomosti*). Apart from the fact that these contain much information lacking in the report to St. Petersburg (about age, geographic and social origin, family members, origins, property, kinship within the parish staff, and the like), even the data used for the annual report is infinitely richer than the statistical tables sent to the Synod. For example, the bishop compiled data—upon the insistence of the Synod—about the education of priests, deacons, and sacristans, and these reports clearly demonstrated the level achieved by the three ranks, with a deep gulf between priests (virtually all of whom had a seminary degree) and the deacons and sacristans (who rarely graduated from the seminary). But the original personal service file shows much more—the precise nature of education (which rank, *razriad,* of the priest's seminary graduating class, or just how far the deacon and sacristan advanced in ecclesiastical schools). More important still, these parish-level records include the dean's assessment of the religious knowledge of the deacon and sacristans—namely, whether they know the catechism or not; it was by no means uncommon, especially in the first half of the 19th century, to report that the deacon or, especially, sacristan had partial comprehension or even no knowledge of the catechism—and hence was of no use to the priest in his task to raise the cognitive understanding of Orthodoxy among the laity. These service registers also contain information about the pastoral activities of the priest himself to enlighten his flock—in particular, how many sermons (and what kind—original or cribbed from a printed collection) that he delivered during the year. The *klirovye vedomosti* from a district in Kursk diocese in 1840, for example, show that the deacon or sacristan "knows in part," "understands," or "does not know" the catechism (Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Kurskoi oblasti, Fond 20, op. 2, No. 10). A similar picture emerges from the service registers for districts in: Irkutsk in 1730 (Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Irkutskoi oblasti, Fond 50, op. 1, No. 3840); Tver' in 1830 (Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Tverskoi oblasti, Fond 160, op. 1, No. 16272); and Kiev in 1830 (TsDIAK Ukrainy, Fond 127, op. 1009, No. 275).

editing, simplification, and generalization. For example, in 1913 the Synod—at government behest—conducted a survey of diocesan opinion about youthful social deviance ("hooliganism") and its root causes; the inquiry ultimately resulted in a thick Synodal collection of diocesan responses. To analyze this issue, some bishops formed special commissions, solicited the opinion of local clergy, but ultimately produced a concise summary of these more complex, often contradictory, analyses of the problem. Sometimes the initiative for diocesan conferences and assembling opinions from below emanated from diocesan authorities, not the Synod.[49] The perceived need for such input from below sharply increased after 1905. The archbishop of Vladimir diocese, for example, convoked a "special commission on the question of improving the religious-moral condition of the population of Vladimir diocese," which prepared an elaborate analysis of the differentiated religious conditions then prevailing in the diocese.[50]

Not only commission reports but everyday documentation (*deloproizvodstvo*)—consistory protocols, individual files—provide the bricks for reconstructing parish life. For mapping the religious attitudes of the faithful, the diocesan archives offer varied and unmediated paperwork. The consistory archive of Vladimir, for example, preserved not only the consistory's own minutes (with details on cases and their dispositions), but the original files on a broad variety of subjects, such as the bishop's visitations,[51] penance and deviance,[52] reports on miracles,[53] requests to authorize icon

[49] By far the most significant initiative for parish-level opinion was the systematic collection of information and opinion in the 1860s by the special commission for reform of the parish clergy, which solicited—and obtained—detailed responses on the economy and schools of parishes all across Russia. The responses, a massive collection, are in RGIA, Fond 804, op. 1, razdel 3.

[50] GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, No. 4856, ff. 1–10. For the relevant texts and analysis, see Freeze, "Dechristianization in Holy Rus?"

[51] GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, No. 3887.

[52] For example, the case of a believer who refused to perform penance (GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, No. 4307).

[53] Reports of miracles, whether dismissive or supportive, abound; see, for example, GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, Nos. 2166 and 4681. These reports sometimes found their way into the diocesan gazette; see, for example, "Chudesnoe istselenie besnovatoi," 287–290.

processions,[54] annual reports on charitable and missionary societies,[55] sundry types of parish demands (including the removal—and sometimes return—of the local priest),[56] investigations of radical priests[57] and seminary disorders,[58] accounts from missionaries and priests about the Old Belief,[59] sectarians,[60] and apostasy of believers.[61] While some such matters required Synodal review and approval (indeed, the acquisition of real estate even required the personal approval of the emperor himself), much was left to the discretion of the bishop and left no trace in the Synodal archive in St. Petersburg. And even when such matters required central approval (e.g., the formation of women's religious communities), oversight and further development remained an object of diocesan, not central, record-keeping. Even in matters of intense concern to St. Petersburg, such as missions and religious dissent, the disaggregated, raw files at the diocesan level add much to what was filtered

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[54] From the mid-18th to the mid-19th century, Church authorities were highly distrustful of icon processions, but thereafter proved more accommodating—in a transparent desire to use such occasions to mobilize and demonstrate the faith. The faithful eagerly exploited the shift in policy; see, for example, GAVO, Fond 590, op. 1, No. 469.

[55] See, for example, the requisite annual report of a parish trusteeship (*popechitel'stvo*) in GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, No. 4216.

[56] GAVO, Fond 556, op. 110, No. 273, ff. 191–212; and op. 3, No. 956, ff. 1–29. Parishioners also fought to regain control over the parish treasury and to limit, even abolish, the gratuities traditionally paid to the local clergy (GAVO, Fond 556, op. 111, No. 1111, ff. 387–389).

[57] GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, Nos. 4594, 4595; and op. 3, No. 942. It bears emphasizing that the central repositories contain but a fraction of local reporting; most, in fact, came through the offices of the chief procurator on the basis of complaints by the Ministry of the Interior. For an overview of the central reports, showing much more clerical radicalism than traditionally recognized, see the discussion in Freeze, "Church and Politics," 269–297; Freeze, "Priests and Revolution"; and the detailed study of 247 radical priests in Pisiotis, *Orthodoxy versus Autocracy*.

[58] GAVO, Fond 454, op. 3, No. 225.

[59] GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, No. 4331, ff. 1–94.

[60] Sectarians became increasingly worrisome, with a corresponding increase in reports; see, for example, GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, Nos. 4277 and 4632.

[61] After the manifesto on religious freedom in April 1905, underground sectarians made haste to file for legal exit from the Orthodox Church; see for example, the application for conversion to the Old Belief in GAVO, Fond 556, op. 111, No. 4785.

and sent to the capital. Thus diocesan authorities amassed their own files on dissenters, from the Old Believers to the new sectarian movements, with rich detail on the challenge and diocesan responses.[62] Still more graphic and concrete were the files upon which such reports were based but which found only pale reflection in the general commentary for the diocese.[63]

In sum, while the annual diocesan reports are useful, they were perforce a terse simplification of the underlying files in diocesan consistories. Above all, the reports tend to propagate the "myth of the mean," to offer generalized accounts that conceal the principal characteristic of popular Orthodoxy—its very heterogeneity, the particularism that was the quintessence of religious life at the grassroots. Moreover, a careful reading of the local files reveals a highly differentiated picture of popular religiosity, not only in the deans' reports, but also in the array of files on clergy-parish conflicts, reassertion of parish prerogatives, and the like.

Divorce: Social Change and Administrative Breakdown

From the mid-19th century, cases involving marriage and divorce gradually emerged as a central, increasingly dominant preoccupation of ecclesiastical administration. Such had not been the case in earlier times; until the late 18th century, the Church had formal authority over such matters, but lacked the documentation, administration, and even the incentive to intercede.[64] By the 1850s it had

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[62] In Vladimir diocese, for example, the bishop received elaborate reports and proposals from local clergy about the Old Belief (GAVO, Fond 556, op. 1, No. 4275, ff. 1–19; and No. 4331, ff. 1–94) and sectarianism (No. 4885).

[63] For the commentary by a diocesan missionary in Volhynia, see DAZhO, Fond 1, op. 43, No. 166, unpaginated. The same file includes the draft text of the final text by Archbishop Antonii (Khrapovitskii). For the array of commentaries by local deans in Lithuania, see LVIA, Fond 605, op. 9, No. 1587, ff. 52–74.

[64] See Freeze, "Bringing Order," 709–746. I fear that I cannot accept the views expressed in Daniel Kaiser, "'Whose Wife?'," 302–323. Although he has combed the extant sources, he does not give due critical consideration to the institutional backwardness of the pre-Petrine Church (in personnel, finance, and the lack of such rudimentary but essential documentation as metrical books and marriage licenses), but relies upon incidental and sporadic documentation, and equates the prescriptive with the quotidian. An incomplete source base is of course the bane of medieval Russian history; nonetheless it is essential, as I have argued here, to historicize, not simply invoke, the extant documentation.

established a complex of rules to regulate the making and unmaking of marriage; the goal was to protect this holy sacrament from violation and frivolous dissolution.[65] Although such cases remained relatively rare at mid-century (fewer than 100 to 200 coming before the Synod per annum), they steadily proliferated—coming to number in the thousands and to constitute over half of all Synodal business on the eve of World War I. Most striking was the Church's adamant resistance, yet steady acquiescence to marital dissolution. Most strikingly, in the mid-19th century the Church approved a minuscule number of divorces (the subtext to *Anna Karenina)* and formally precluded the option of separation (the convenient alternative for Catholic countries in the West). Given the small volume of cases, the Synod had ample time to make a close review—and found cause to reject—divorces already recommended by diocesan authorities.

That meticulous review became increasingly difficult in the late 19th century: the sheer volume of cases overwhelmed the Synodal administration, devouring much (if not most) of the time and resources of this central governing organ of the Church. This rigorous policy came just as the family order began to undergo the profound, even revolutionary, transformation—symptoms of which included the breakdown of patriarchal authority, extended families, submissiveness of youth, and the like. Whereas in the mid-19th century, the Church had to deal with only a handful of divorce cases, by the early 20th century these had increased exponentially —to some 7,000 percent over the earlier level. While the Synod insisted on its duty to review and approve all divorces, the sheer volume of cases made that increasingly impossible.

These Synodal files on marriage and divorce are as valuable as they are voluminous. Above all, they provide a clear guide to official policy, indicating the Church's adamant adherence to canons (e.g., the categorical ban on a fourth marriage), as well as its willingness to accommodate undeniable changes in social reality. Apart from central policy on the family and divorce, the files also provide some insight into individual cases. Namely, the files sent to

[65] Not that such devotion to indissolubility of the matrimonial sacrament was unique to the Russian Orthodox Church: not only the Catholic, but also Protestant Churches opposed a liberalization of divorce, whether construed as the secularization of a holy rite or the breakdown of social order. See, for example: McBride, "Public Authority," 747–768; and Bennett, "Church of England and Divorce," 625–644.

St. Petersburg for confirmation include an "extract" (abstract) summarizing the case and justifying the diocesan recommendation to grant divorce.

Nevertheless, such files are an abbreviated abstract of the originals in diocesan repositories. The latter include:

- the original petition for divorce (often prolix, personal, poignant);
- the signed (sometimes emotional, contentious, annotated);
- responses to the mandatory "exhortation" to preserve the marriage;
- material evidence (love letters, lewd photographs, written confessions);
- any requests for representation by a lawyer;
- the defendant's initial deposition, conceding or contesting the accusations of the spouse;
- the court hearing (*sudogovorenie*);
- the investigation and testimony of witnesses;
- the consistory's summation and recommendation;
- the bishop's final verdict;
- the defendant's post-verdict deposition,
- the Synod's formal review, either approving or denying the divorce;
- certificate of divorce for the plaintiff;
- provisions for penance for the "guilty" party.

Doubtless, the most arresting and interesting feature of the diocesan cases is the "narrative" of plaintiffs and defendants—sometimes terse and scripted by lawyers (in the case of elites), but often personal, disjointed, emotional (especially in the case of the disprivileged). These depositions tell a story and invoke dominant myths and norms in a desperate effort to persuade the ecclesiastical court. No less important is the procedural dimension, revealing how parties initiated, negotiated, contested, compromised, and sabotaged the process. If the Synod files tell us the final outcome, the diocesan files reveal how—and why—the parties fought to dissolve, or sustain, each of their marriages.

More important, however, are the files *not* in the Synodal archive: those divorce applications rejected by the bishop as

unproven or not based on legal grounds.[66] The bishop (in fact, his consistory) terminated numerous cases for sheer lack of evidence, reflecting their determination to keep the family sacrosanct.[67] But the most interesting cases were those that sought a divorce on *illegal* grounds, a phenomenon that sharply increased as divorce became "more democratic," involving the disprivileged and no longer mainly the elites. Thus, while the Synod did review (to confirm or deny) all cases that the bishop approved, it never saw the vast majority of cases—namely, those that the bishop had *denied* and hence had not forwarded to St. Petersburg for approval. These applications are significant not only because of their sheer numbers,

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[66] In many cases, sharp-eyed, vigilant diocesan authorities rejected the divorce on factual or technical grounds. Failure to provide the mandatory documents, pay the obligatory fees, and appear for the court hearings could all bring a case to an inconclusive end, with the consistory terminating the file and sending it to the archive. For decisions to terminate consideration on formalistic bureaucratic grounds, such as the lack of requisite documents (metrical copy on the marriage and the like), see two cases from 1912 in Kholm (TsDIAL Ukrainy, Fond 693, op. 1, No. 809, ff. 1–5; and No. 810, ff. 1–3), and from 1913 in Kholm (No. 24, ff. 31–34). In 1910 the Volhynia consistory terminated a divorce case when the plaintiff failed to file the requisite documents (DAZhO, Fond 1, op. 37, No. 207, f. 20–20v). Moreover, the consistory carefully investigated each divorce application and often concluded that the plaintiff had filed false data. For example, in 1913, the Kholm consistory rejected a divorce application on the grounds prolonged disappearance (defined as five years of unknown whereabouts), noting that within the last year the couple had co-signed a legal document. TsDIAL Ukrainy, Fond 693, op. 1, No. 25, ff. 27–28v. It also rejected suits where the plaintiff lacked sufficient evidence (especially in the case of alleged adultery). For example, when Col. I. D. Kudel'skii sought to divorce his wife on grounds of adultery, his wife affirmed that she was indeed guilty and did not agree to remain married to him. Nevertheless, the consistory denied the divorce on the grounds that the "eyewitnesses" had not in fact seen her in the act of intercourse but only in the company of men. TsDIAL Ukrainy, Fond 693, op. 2, No. 348, ff. 1–128. When the husband appealed the negative decision, the Synod upheld the consistory (25 June 1915).

[67] For example, Archbishop Tikhon (later patriarch) carefully reviewed divorce cases; even when the consistory approved the divorce, he interceded to quash the decision on the grounds that the "eyewitness" testimony was dispositive. See LVIA, Fond 605, op. 9 No. 1877, f. 62–62v. For similar action in four other cases, see No. 1919, ff. 3, 258; and No. 1920, ff. 97–98v, 218–220v.

but because of their content: plaintiffs, in overwhelming numbers, demanded divorce on grounds not recognized by the Church:

- spousal abuse, including attempted homicides;[68]
- syphilis;[69]
- desertion and refusal to cohabit (including "abhorrence of sex");[70]
- mutual adultery (since *both* were "guilty," neither had a claim to having suffered as the "innocent" party);[71]
- apostasy;[72]
- epilepsy;[73]

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[68] In a typical case, a peasant woman applied for divorce because of "cruel treatment," but the Vladimir consistory responded that this cause "cannot serve as the grounds for the dissolution of marriage" (GAVO, Fond op. 109, No. 611, f. 152–152v). Fedor Davidiuk, after 16 years of marriage, applied for divorce on the grounds that his wife was mentally unstable, had threatened him repeatedly with an axe, and in various ways had revealed her intent to take his life. Because he failed to provide evidence of premarital insanity, the consistory refused to take action (TsDIAL Ukrainy, Fond 693, op. 2, No. 381, ff. 1–13).

[69] In one extraordinary case, the Synod obtained the emperor's permission to grant divorce on the basis of syphilis; see RGIA, Fond 797, op. 79, otdel 2, st. 3, No. 214, ff. 1–3. See also RGIA, Fond 797, op. 76, otdel 2, st. 3, No. 106, f. 11–11v.

[70] For example, see the petition from a husband complaining that his wife refused to cohabit and was leading a lascivious life (TsDIAL Ukrainy, Fond 693 (Kholmskaia dukhovnaia konsistoriia), op. 1, No. 809, ff. 1–5). In another case, where the wife abandoned her husband and refused to return, triggering his application for divorce, the consistory patiently explained that "the disinclination of one spouse to continue to cohabit and their separate residence is not foreseen by the law as a ground for the dissolution of a marriage" (TsDIAL Ukrainy, Fond 693, op. 1, No. 506, f. 5–5v). For two similar cases in Vladimir in 1909, see GAVO, Fond 556, op. 111, No. 1128, ff. 37–37v, 42–43.

[71] For a case in which a couple jointly requested divorce, with both confessing to adultery, and the Kholm consistory automatically rejected the suit, see TsDIAL Ukrainy, Fond 693, op. 1, No. 29, ff. 47–48.

[72] Some applicants sought to exploit the Church's inherent distrust of mixed marriages, claiming that the spouse had committed apostasy and demanded divorce on these grounds. In a case in 1910, the Kholm consistory investigated and found that the true cause of family conflict, threats, and separate residence, and therefore denied the application (TsDIAL Ukrainy, Fond 693, op. 2, No. 343, ff. 1–21).

[73] N. I. Rozhkov, for example, asked for divorce on the grounds that his wife "suffers from epilepsy and is completely incapable of physical labor," and as a result "I have no one to prepare my food and to wash my

- physical deformities (from "deafness" to "stench from the ear");[74]
- postmarital insanity;[75]
- sexual incapacity (variously defined to include impotence, infertility, even bedwetting and desertion);[76]
- consensual agreement to dissolve the marriage.

In part such applications reflected the sheer increase in demand, especially among the uneducated lower classes, but many also indicate a willingness to challenge accepted verities and a determination to impose popular norms and values on the Church, not vice-versa. A close analysis of the diocesan holdings reflects, for example, a profound change in gender relations, above all, in a new female assertiveness and challenge to traditional patriarchy.[77] This mass of diocesan paperwork also provides some important clues to the capacity of ecclesiastical administration to function effectively: in a word, the massive increase in paperwork, particularly the cases involving marriage and divorce, gradually had a paralyzing impact on Church administration, both at the center and diocesan levels. The Synod itself had become primarily a divorce court; whereas in the mid-19th century it handled fewer than 200 cases per year, by the early 20th century such cases had mushroomed into the thousands and increasingly overwhelmed the workload of its understaffed administration. Matters were still worse at the diocesan level. In St. Petersburg diocese, for example, by 1902 this diocese alone had to process 303 cases (50 percent

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clothes." The Kholm consistory rejected the application explaining that epilepsy was not grounds for divorce: TsDIAL Ukrainy, Fond 693, op. 2, No. 518, ff. 1–6. For a similar case in Volhynia diocese, see DAZhO, Fond 1, op. 33, No. 305, ff. 1–2, in which the consistory flatly declared that "epilepsy cannot serve as a legal basis for divorce." For a case from Odessa see DAOO, Fond 37, op. 2b, No. 3838, ff. 1–16. In this case the plaintiff, even after the consistory flatly explained that epilepsy was not grounds for divorce, continued to plead for marital dissolution on these grounds.

[74] TsDIAL Ukrainy, Fond 693, op. 2, No. 382a, ff. 1–3; and LVIA, Fond 605, op. 9, No. 984, ff. 197–199v.

[75] TsDIAL Ukrainy, Fond 693, op. 2, No. 381, ff. 1–13.

[76] RGIA, Fond 796, op. 189, No. 3473, ff. 8–9; DAOO, Fond 73, op. 1, No. 3811, ff. 1–2; and LVIA, Fond 605, op. 9, No. 1376, ff. 90–90v.

[77] For a more extended analysis of the divorce crisis in late Imperial Russia, see Freeze, "Profane Narratives."

more than the Synod in 1850), and the number increased dramatically in the last decade of the *ancien régime*: 694 by 1913.[78] While such problems afflicted spheres of state administration,[79] the overloading of divorce cases proved particularly devastating for the Church—given the sheer volume of cases and the frozen state of its resources and staffing.

Local Archives: Promises and Perils

This paper has suggested the need to excavate diocesan and local church archives more systematically. The argument is *not* that one should eschew synthesis and generalization, or that one should fixate on the diocese, parish, or individual; rather, it is that historians must engage in multidimensional research, seeking to link the micro and macro, to tap the raw, unprocessed, often chaotic local archives and not simply the more accessible, better organized, and better preserved repositories for central institutions. However important the central archives may be, it is no less essential to incorporate grassroots case studies that draw upon local documentation.

To be sure, the local repositories vary enormously in their completeness and coverage. Diocesan authorities, with scant resources at their disposal, could do little to preserve properly the amassing volume of documentation; the steps taken by the metropolitan of Moscow in 1776 to organize the consistory archive were exceptional.[80] Elsewhere authorities were more zealous about preserving "ancient" (pre-Petrine) documents and indifferent to the fate of more recent materials.[81] An inquiry by the chief procurator in 1797 found that some archives (e.g., in Suzdal') were in decent condition, but elsewhere matters were quite different. In Kazan', for example, "because of the negligence of the consistory," the files

[78] Altogether, for 1905–1916, this diocese had to process a total of 6,632 files, of which only 4,706 had been resolved by 1916, the rest still unresolved by the February Revolution (RGIA, Fond 797, op. 96, No. 271, ff. 216–219 (*spravka* in the chief procurator's archive).

[79] For the case of the Senate, see Peter Liessem, *Verwaltunsgerichtsbarkeit im späten Zarenreich*, 82–87.

[80] Rozanov, *Istoriia Moskovskogo eparkhial'nogo upravleniia* 3(1): 31–32.

[81] In the case of one monastery in Voronezh, the diocesan archive had 86 volumes of materials, but few from the mid-18th century. Nikol'skii, "Materialy dlia istorii," 19–22.

were "in the worst condition, without any order and good care, so that because of the poor state of the place of preservation many files were covered not only by dust but a massive amount of snow."[82] Underfinanced and marginalized, they suffered substantial losses, failed to undergo the rationalization and reorganization characteristic of central repositories, and sometimes lost major portions of their holdings.[83] Fire took a heavy toll. Flames destroyed virtually the entire archive in Tobol'sk on 5 November 1797; an inventory of the Viatka archive from 1773–1777 showed that almost all the files from 1700–1778 had been destroyed by a consistory fire.[84]

Matters improved, but unevenly, in the late imperial period. The Church, beginning in 1869, undertook a deliberate campaign to establish some order in the diocesan archives; initial reports showed that most dioceses had indeed failed to organize and preserve their files in secure, proper conditions.[85] As reports from the late imperial era attest, many diocesan archives were subject to pilfering,[86] expurgation, and storage in pernicious conditions;[87] consistory archives suffered enormous losses. An inventory of the Vladimir diocesan archive in 1880 reported 162,073 files; of that immense sum only about 13,000 survive—and these include

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[82] RGIA, Fond 797, op. 2, No. 1502.

[83] For the case of the Moscow consistory archive, see Rozanov, *Ob arkhive*.

[84] RGIA, Fond 797, op. 2, No. 1502, ff. 74v, 26–28.

[85] For the response of the Lithuanian consistory to the Synodal decree of 19 January 1869, see LVIA, Fond 605, op. 8, No. 378, ff. 1–85. An inventory on files scheduled for re-storage indicates the presence of various files from Brest, Minsk, and Polotsk consistories (ff. 17–18v). Relocation, associated with the reorganization of boundaries and formation of new dioceses invariably led to losses and confusion. For the example of Ekaterinoslav (where files were shipped in 1801 from Poltava), and the attendant losses, compounded later by the theft of readers, see Bednov, *Svedeniia.*

[86] The choirboys in the episcopal residence of Viakta, for example, purloined and sold files in the 1880s (Ignat'ev, "Rukopis' podkantseliarista Gavriila Blinova," 26–28).

[87] According to the *reviziia* (inspection) of Vladimir diocese in 1915, the consistory archive occupied the first floor ("a moist, cold never heated space") of the dilapidated building that housed the consistory itself. RGIA, Fond 796, op. 202, No. 1736, f. 5v.

new files from the post-1880 period.[88] And still later depredations were to come in the 1930s, when the closing of churches proceeded without regard to the preservation of parish archives.[89] While prerevolutionary archival inventories[90] and documentary publications help to fill the gap,[91] still much has been lost and little has been reordered for easy processing and analysis. But other collections cover the entire imperial period and preserve tens of thousands of files (see Table 1).[92]

While central collections remain important (for lacunae, *revizii,* and policy), it is essential to tap diocesan and local repositories. Only thus can one "decentralize" Russian religious history to discern the kaleidoscopic complexity at the grassroots, and to recover rather than mask the particularism that prevailed under the *ancien régime*. Microhistory cannot, of course, promise to lay bare "reality," things as they "really" were; in this age (or afterglow) of postmodernism, only a troglodyte might fancy that local documents are photographic records of the past. What they do offer, however, is more detail, sometimes revealing, often (seemingly) extraneous, that allows the historian—not some diocesan clerk, bishop, or Synodal official—to draw his own inferences and conclusions.

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[88] For the 1880 inventory see RGIA, Fond 796, op. 440, No. 32, ff. 118–119; for the Soviet inventory of 1959, see Batulin, *Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Vladimirskoi oblasti.*

[89] Even so, the parish archives before 1917 were poorly maintained: priests had neither the time nor the incentive to compile and preserve archival materials (other than metrical books, which were critical for regulating marriage and other matters). Significantly, despite repeated attempts by the Synod to require that priests compile "historical-statistical chronicles," few in fact did so. See a typical Synodal decree of 12 October 1866 in RGIA, Fond 796, op. 146 g. 1865, No. 1759, f. 26.

[90] Malitskii, "Vladimirskii konsistorskii arkhiv XVIII v."; and Znamenskii, "Opisanie dokumentov," 51–72.

[91] See, for example, the list of works in Freeze, *Russian Levites,* 299–307.

[92] In addition to consistories, oblast and other local repositories hold a host of other ecclesiastical collections—the archives of monasteries, some churches, the seminary, and sundry other ecclesiastical organizations. For a comprehensive inventory, see *Istoriia russkoi pravoslavnoi tserkvi.*

Table 1 Holdings of Diocesan Consistories: Sample Inventory

Diocese	Number of Files	Years of Coverage
Arhangel'sk	32,647	1744–1920
Astrakhan	1,671	1708–1917
Don	14,310	1829–1918
Iaroslavl'	32,424	1740–1918
Irkutsk	12,602	1725–1919
Kaluga	9,980	1780–1919
Kamchatka	216	1856–1910
Kazan'	20,308	1724–1919
Kostroma	4,620	1792–1919
Kursk	1,653	1742–1919
Moscow	104,530	1725–1929
Nizhnii Novgorod	42,163	1672–1917

Diocese	Number of Files	Years of Coverage
Novgorod	5,447	1702–1918
Orel	489	1721–1917
Orenburg	17,019	1800–1918
Penza	1,172	1818–1917
Pereslavl' DK (Iaroslavl')	2,634	1722–1844
Perm'	2,751	1761–1922
Petersburg	61,079	1720–1918
Pskov (Velikie Luki)	1,322	1720–1909
Riazan'	34,919	1708–1918
Samara	32,609	1787–1917
Saratov	10,055	1799–1919
Simbirsk	8,121	1815–1918

Diocese	Number of Files	Years of Coverage
Smolensk	5517	1744–1918
Stavropol	38769	1886–1918
Suzdal′	1,900	1717–1800
Tambov	2,454	1759–1923
Tobol′sk	36,407	1721–1919
Tomsk	18,811	1759–1921
Tula	110,903	1800–1918
Tver′	93,090	1744–1918
Velikii Ustiug	6,374	1721–1788
Viatka	111,427	1722–1937
Vladimir	12,911	1708–1919
Vologda	27,408	1654–1917
Voronezh	1,342	1704–1874

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